SCHOOL TROUBLE IN HARLEM

February 5, 1959 25¢

Credit Cards: The Thirty-Day Tycoons

THE REPORTER

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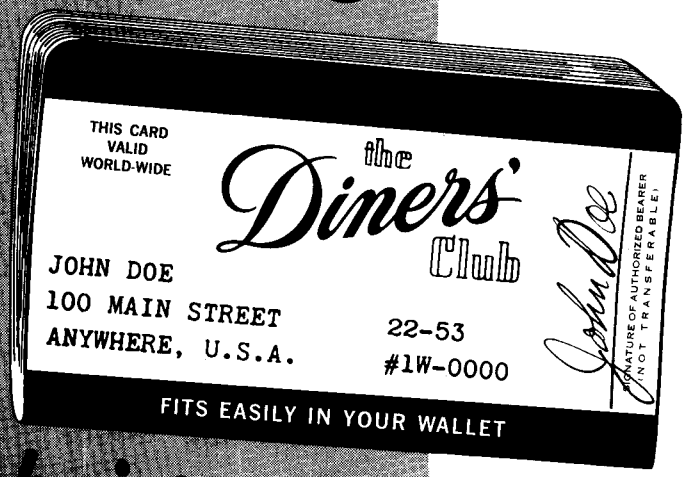

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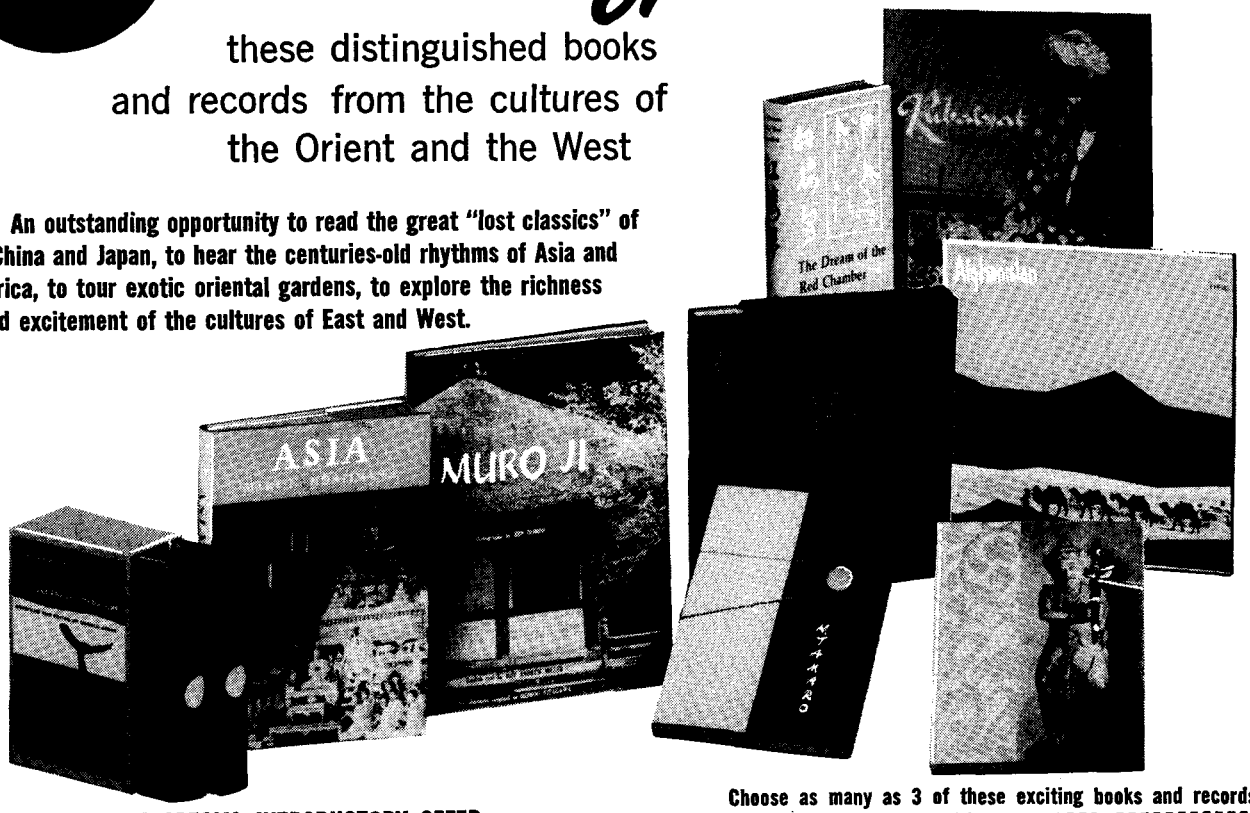

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THE REPORTER'S NOTES

The Totally Informed

Shortly before Congress convened, a story appeared in the New York *Herald Tribune* to the effect that "An unprecedented effort is taking shape in the Administration and high within the Democratic Senate to minimize partisan conflict over foreign policy during the two years of coalition Government ahead." President Eisenhower, it seemed, had ordered his top policymakers to brief Senate Foreign Relations Committee members and "to answer all questions with candor." There was "envisaged the creation of an elite corps of totally informed legislators . . . continuously privy both to basic Administration designs and to the information on which policy is being based."

Even if one makes allowances for a certain exuberance on the part of the *Herald Tribune* reporter, his story appeared to have substance. In December there had been a friendly exchange of correspondence between the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Theodore Francis Green (D., Rhode Island) and President Eisenhower, in which Green submitted a proposed outline for secret committee hearings to explore vital matters of policy. As a start, Green had asked that Secretary Dulles brief the members on four currently critical areas of foreign policy. As Senator William Fulbright, ranking majority member of the committee, remarked about Mr. Dulles's January 14 appearance, "Members of the committee awaited with more than usual interest . . . what the Secretary might say."

The results were something less than satisfactory, at least to Senator Fulbright. As he complained in a statement before the Senate, Dulles chose to read to the committee members a lengthy prepared statement which was largely "a rehash of old press releases and old speeches." Fulbright noted that the Secretary's statement contained no forecast of tactics and pressures from the Soviet bloc, only one sentence concerning relations with uncommitted African nations, no details of current strains on U.S. alliances, no discussion of possible changes in U.S. policies in 1959. These four topics had been specifically requested.

Fulbright took the trouble to go through the Secretary's prepared text and underline "those sentences in which there was contained some new information, or some revealing insight, or some provocative idea, or some analytical assistance." They numbered six in all. So that *Reporter* readers, too, may be among the elite corps of the totally informed, we reproduce these six sentences in their entirety.

On space probes: "In this field, the United States is still trying to 'catch up' and make up for the head start of the Soviets."

On trade policy: "As one example only, the dumping of cotton textiles in Southeast Asia has reduced Japanese exports in that area and is already reducing exports of cotton from the United States to Japan."

On the British-French-Israeli decision to comply with the United Nations "solution" of the Suez affair: "This may well prove to be a historical landmark."

On exchanges with the Soviet Union: "We are glad that the First Deputy Premier of the Soviet Union, Mr. Mikoyan, is now here learning about our country. We would like to see a broader exchange of students."

On the general state of things: "This worldwide movement toward freedom is accompanied by a growing awareness of the deadly nature of Sino-Soviet imperialism."

In conceding some interest to these six statements, Fulbright was certainly generous. In presenting such a report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Secretary Dulles was—well, let us say, undiplomatic.

Flexible Principles

Last fall, the Civil Aeronautics Board said it would not permit extra charges for jet service, since jets were cheaper to run than piston-engine planes, and should offer *lower*

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  The extra in "Extraneous"—
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It's never the woman now who pays,
  She's the miss in the "Miscellaneous."

The slim girl, the slight girl,
The lady-of-the-night girl,
Now she's high in the upper bracket,
Business end of the business racket,
  Expense-account deduction—
And no matter how taxable her ways,
It's never the woman now who pays,
  She's only the pro in "Production."

—SEC

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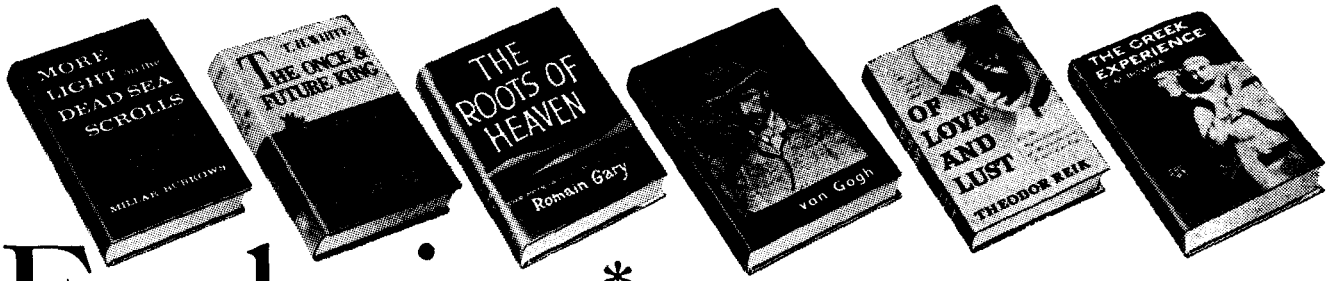

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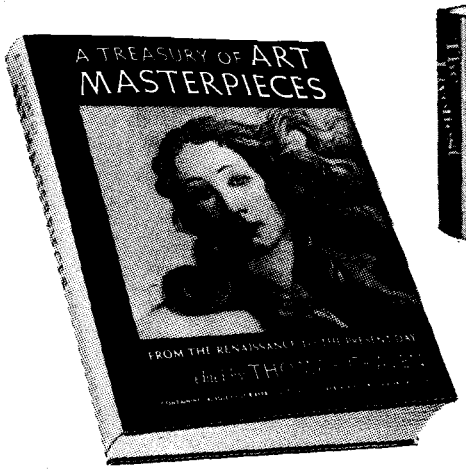

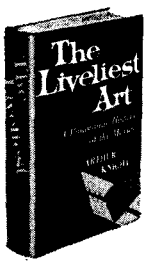

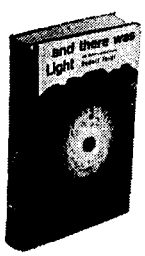

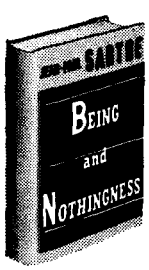

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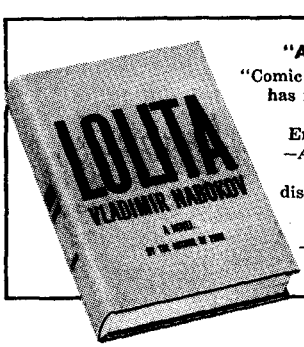

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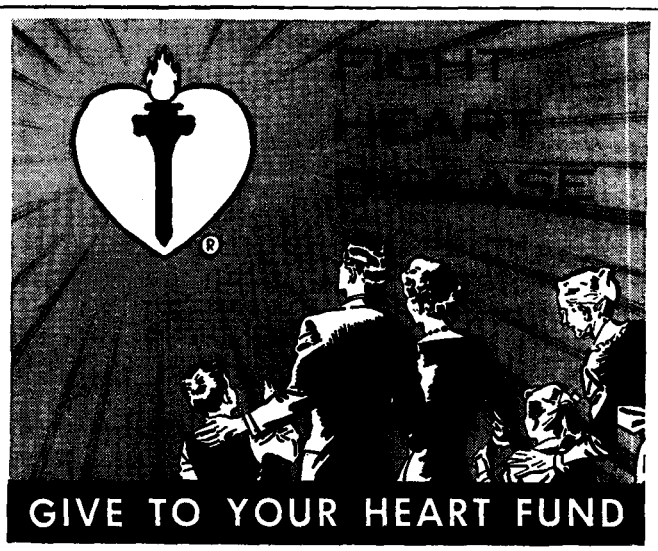

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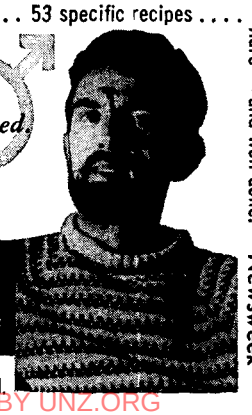

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fares to fill their greater capacity. But in "The Growing Pains of Jet Travel," in our December 25, 1958, issue, John L. Hess commented that it would be unwise to assume that the CAB would stand by its stated policy. Alas, his fears have been confirmed all too soon. In December, as Mr. Hess noted, the agency had let National Airlines get around the ban by relabeling its first-class seats "luxury class" at ten dollars extra, and calling the coach seats "first class." Now the CAB has permitted American Airlines to add the ten dollars to first-class jet fares, without the hypocrisy.

Incidentally, the dispute between the pilots and the engineers over who was to be the "third man" in the cockpit of the jet has been solved, ingeniously, by adding a *fourth* man, another pilot. Commercial jets are brand new. But the idea that they will make travel cheaper is already obsolete.

These Things Were Said:

¶ We Republicans think of a person first as a taxpayer.—*Senator Kenneth Keating of New York.*

¶ I do not go along with a current popular view that the primary aim of a political figure is to be all things to all men. This may make him a pretty good politician but he won't be much of a statesman.—*Vice President Richard Nixon in an interview with the London* Sunday Times.

¶ Delegates to the Afro-Asian seminar on cooperation [in Israel] were entertained in traditional Israeli fashion by a group of teenage *hora* dancers. When this was over they produced their own entertainment. The Executive Secretary of the Ghana Farmers' Union sang a soft love song. The man from the Kenya Dock Workers' Union performed a dirge, the words of which (he explained in English) meant: "To get the white men out of your land you've got to kill their babies, kill their babies, kill their babies...."—Report in the London *Spectator.*

¶ I was absolutely mesmerized. He is really cute.—*Perry Como after a visit with President Eisenhower.*

¶ The President's advisers report that he has become convinced that talking to a few Congressional leaders is not enough. They say he believes that to put his program through the

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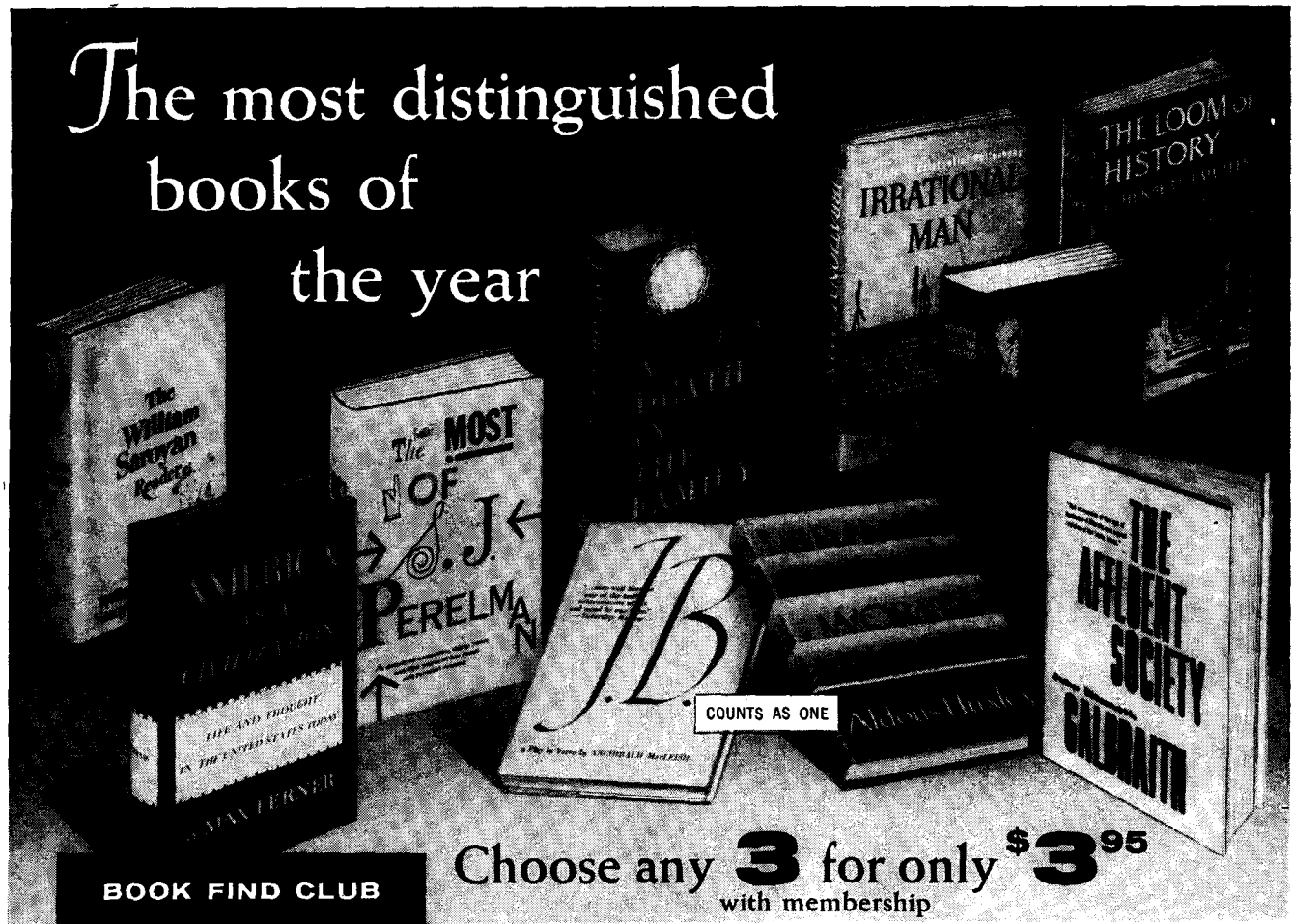

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heavily Democratic Congress, he must embark on an active campaign to develop more support for his ideas among the voters themselves. One form G.O.P. leaders hope this will take will be dramatic, imaginative veto messages."—*Wall Street Journal.*

¶ If they [the Russians] get to Venus they will find it boiling hot. If they get to Mars they will find it freezing cold. On neither planet will they be able to breathe. The best of luck to them.—*Richard van der Riet Woolley, Astronomer Royal of Great Britain.*

¶ The fact that satellites and rockets have not detected the All-Highest, angels and so on, bears testimony against religious convictions and strengthens disbelief in God.—*Y.T. Fadeyev, head of the scientific-atheistic section of the journal* Science and Life.

LIKE A PIP SQUEEZED OUT OF A GRAPE

BY ERIC SEVAREID

We want to warn Mayor Wagner that for New York the zero hour, the nothing hour, is approaching; the time when that one more vehicle will be added to the traffic stream and nothing will move, north or south or across the town. We refuse to offer any solution, since he has already turned down the most practical ideas so far suggested—a plan for everybody on the West Side to shove cars into the Hudson River, everybody on the East Side to shove them in the East River; and a second plan that at the next jam-up, all vehicles would be paved over with cement and the city then start all over again.

If the mayor persists in his refusal to try either of these plans, he has only one alternative. He can declare New York City out of bounds for rain or snow. The little raindrops from Heaven and the little snowdrops no longer fit into the New York scheme of things; they must be ruled out, with a firm hand.

You take Monday night. A sweet, soft rain was falling around six o'clock. The population was terrorized. People scurried, heads down. Policemen frantically tried to unscramble intersections where cars were locked together, their drivers having lost their heads. High up in office buildings, lights dimmed low, where vice-presidents bedded down for the night on the Bigelows on the floor rather than try to make it to the ranch house in Connecticut.

We hailed a cab. It sped by. In fact, forty-three cabs sped by. Seven busses crawled by, groaning with their cargo of homogenized humanity. The eighth bus stopped; the accordion door at the front struggled open and expelled a female shopper like a pip squeezed from a grape. We took her place, in a hard fight. By some kind of osmotic process, through the next twenty minutes, we seeped down the aisle until we were halfway between the front door and the back door—an ominous position, since our destination could not lie far ahead; and by a careful inch-per-minute-per-block calculation, we realized we would be beyond Harlem at midnight, before we had seeped all the way to the rear door. We read the bus ads. The one in front of our eyes said, "Avoid worries; ride public transit."

We were hemmed in by women. It was impossible to bend to either side without risk of a breach-of-promise suit, but we could bend forward, toward the window. New York bus drivers refuse to call out the streets they stop at; they can count, but they just refuse, that's all. Now, the height of the bus floor from the street in relation to the height of the street signs on the corners is such that one can bend down and peer up through the window to see where he is, providing he is not over five feet one in height.

At our best bend, we could just see the merchandise in the lower part of the shop windows as we crawled by. This is the way experienced New York strap hangers check their position as they ride the busses. Those live lobsters on the ice, they mean street number such-and-such is coming up. That pink lower edge on the playtex girdle, that means number so-and-so. For visitors to the city, this system is a failure. We could feel panic rising in our breast.

Then a miracle happened; a massive surge, like that of lemmings nearing the sea, seeped us right to the back door, where we, too, were expelled like a pip from a grape, and found ourselves only four blocks from our destination.

That is the way New York works. You wait for miracles. Only miracles could make this city work. But, after all, Mayor Wagner isn't named Eisenhower and one day the miracle won't happen. He needn't come running to Washington; he's had his warning.

This is Eric Sevareid, leaving New York, if he can get out.

(From a broadcast over CBS Radio)

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Dr. Coca is one of the world's leading allergy specialists. He is Honorary President of the American Association of Immunologists. For 17 years he was Medical Director of Lederle Laboratories. He taught at the Post Graduate Medical School of Columbia University, was a Professor of Immunology at Cornell, has written extensively for medical journals throughout the world. The findings in "The Pulse Test" were first presented to the medical profession in a technical monograph, "Familial Non-reaginic Food Allergy." This book is in its third printing and we can supply copies at $10.50.

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CORRESPONDENCE

DOWN ON THE FARM

To the Editor: In sharp contrast to the peaceful pastoral scene on the cover of the January 22 *Reporter* is Paul Jacobs's picture ("America's Forgotten People") of the dark aspects of American agriculture—the sweatshops on farms. *The Reporter* is rendering a real public service in throwing the spotlight of public opinion on these conditions.

ELIZABETH S. MAGEE
Executive Secretary
Consumers League of Ohio
Cleveland

To the Editor: I would argue that these slum dwellers are as much the derelicts of a dynamically changing national economy as the "unorganized debris of an organizational society." What we have gotten into, I believe, is the product of some persistently held and basically wrong images about the values and prospects of rural life and of the neurotic compulsion of agriculture to maintain some forms of isolation from the prevailing standards of the industrial economy.

Historically, we have never regarded hired farm work as a lifetime occupation, but only as an interlude. This attitude was initiated with the Jeffersonian image of the good life, in which being a hired farmhand was only a sort of apprenticeship through which the ambitious and persevering would advance to the independence of farm owner-operators. Farm labor was therefore different, and the protections afforded to the industrial classes were not necessary.

Since the First World War, the reality of the apprenticeship prospect has gradually disappeared. Yet the image of uniqueness has survived and has served as the rationale for what Mr. Jacobs calls "an almost blanket exemption from modes of conduct now considered essential to a civilized society."

The therapy that is now called for is an aggressive assault upon the concept that agriculture is fundamentally different in respect to its employment needs and that it is entitled to remain insulated from the established standards of industrial practice and the structure of legislative protections. If a farmer can afford to pay the same price for a Caterpillar tractor as does a construction company and the same price for fuel to power it, how does it happen that he can afford to pay only one third of the construction wage for the man who drives it?

VARDEN FULLER
Professor, Agricultural Economics
University of California
Berkeley

To the Editor: I have spent time in the fields with the American citizen migrant as well as with the Mexican bracero. The latter is exploited by Mexican officials as well as by the American growers, yet he still has a semblance of protection compared with our American Spanish-speaking migrant whom the bracero more directly displaces.

In 1955 at Agate, Colorado, a one-and-a-half-ton truck overturned with fifty-five persons in it—men, women, and children who had been riding day and night for sixteen hundred miles. They were from the Rio Grande Valley near the Mexican border. Some were killed, others spent several weeks at Colorado General Hospital in Denver. When they were released neither the growers for whom they were recruited nor the contractor who was transporting them nor the State Employment that originally signed them up wanted to accept responsibility for their return to their place of origin. Our Welfare Department's red tape would have starved them before doing anything for them. A mother from this group and two children under twelve years of age were in my office one day for several hours while we tried every agency in town to see if we could get some assistance for this family, but to no avail. About 3 P.M. this mother started to faint and then she told us that they had had no food since the day before. We sent this family for a meal and then called about a dozen friends and got enough money to buy them bus tickets back home and for some food on the way. I mention this incident only to illustrate further our social irresponsibility to this group, "The Forgotten People." Yet the growers, through their associations and elected officials, are able to get subsidies from the government, which recruits the Mexican workers for them free of charge. Then the migrants are underpaid, an additional subsidy to the farmer by the segment of our society least able to pay.

As a vice-president of the Catholic Council of the Bishops Committee for the Spanish-speaking people I am very aware and concerned about this problem, and feel that you are making a most valuable contribution to this exploited group and to society in general by having such a timely article in a magazine of the caliber of *The Reporter*.

L. M. LOPEZ
Commission on Human Relations
Denver

To the Editor: Thank you very much for Paul Jacobs's powerful and courageous article. Just the day before, I had thrown into the wastebasket some appeal for migrants without even checking the name of the organization—one of those "whose yearly money-raising appeals are wearily opened and rather indifferently put aside." I would like to make some amends by enclosing a check for the National Sharecroppers Fund. Will you please mail it to them?

A. M. SCHWITTAY, M.D.
Madison, Wisconsin

(The check has been forwarded.)

To the Editor: According to Secretary of Labor Mitchell, I omitted the word "ideally" from the opening statement of his interview, asserting the desirability of applying the minimum-wage law to agricultural workers. Although I have neither a note nor recollection of this particular term being used in the interview, I obviously cannot question the authority of the Secretary in this matter, and I therefore stand corrected.

PAUL JACOBS
New York

THE MISSILE GAP

To the Editor: General Thomas R. Phillips's article "The Growing Missile Gap" (*The Reporter*, January 8) should be published in every major daily newspaper in the country for as long as it takes to get these pertinent facts across to the American public.

JAMES TRIPPE
New York

To the Editor: One can only conclude that the security of the United States, presently and for some years to come, rests on shaky foundations and dangerous assumptions. Don't bother sending the article to Mr. Eisenhower, though; he prefers cowboy stories.

JAMES T. SCHOENBROD
New York

WHAT MAKES NEWS?

To the Editor: Marya Mannes's diatribe against radio and television newscasting ("No News Is Bad News," *The Reporter*, January 22) is misinformed on a number of points. The fact of the matter is that even a shallow perusal of the New York dailies like the *News*, the *Mirror*, the *Post*, the *Telegram*, or, for that matter, most of the out-of-town dailies, will show they are guilty of exactly the same sins which she accuses radio of committing. For instance, during the past few days, these New York dailies have devoted much more headline and column space to a missing Brooklyn infant than to Mr. Mikoyan's visit or to the defeat of the anti-filibuster rules change in the Senate.

Secondly, by changes in delivery, tone, length of time, etc., radio *does* make important distinctions between political unrest in Léopoldville and an elopement in Jersey City.

Miss Mannes is quite right when she says radio news coverage was disappointing during the recent newspaper strike; however, it is my opinion that most newspaper coverage is disappointing most of the time.

RICHARD ELMAN
Newark, New Jersey

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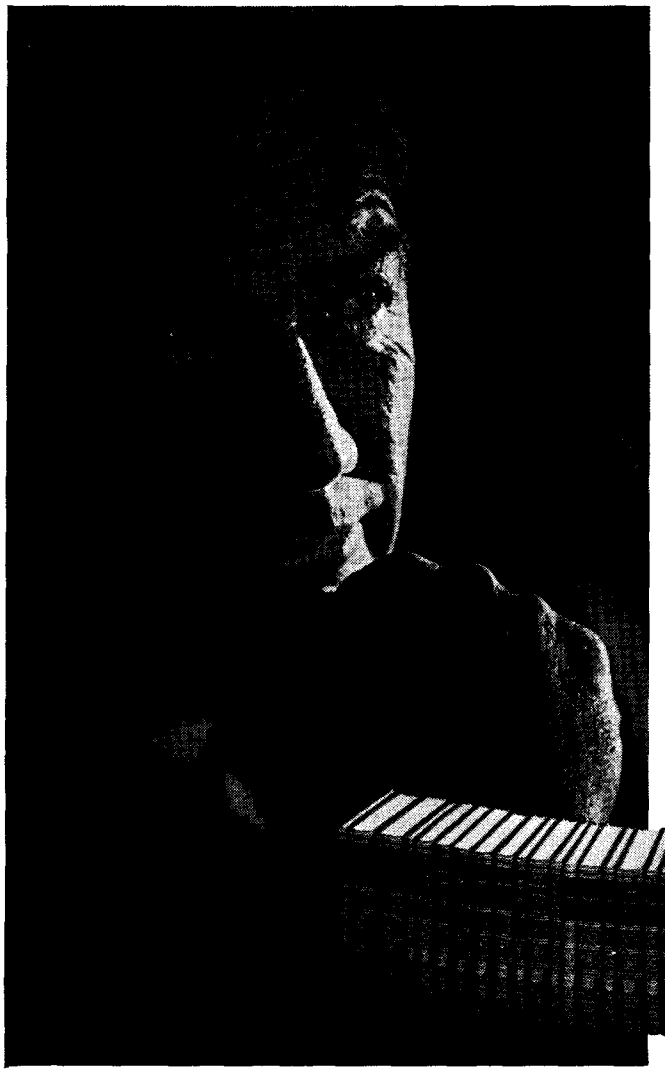

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Oliver Wendell Holmes once wrote: "A man's mind stretched by a new idea can never go back to its original dimensions." The truth of this statement cannot, of course, be denied. A child who suddenly realizes that the letters in the alphabet are not just isolated sounds and shapes, but meaningful symbols that form words, has grasped an idea that will lead to a continuing expansion of his mind. There comes a time, though, in the lives of too many of us when our minds become occupied only with knowledge we have already learned. When that happens our minds cease to grow.

Unhappily, the more successful a person is in his daily work, the more likelihood there is that this unfortunate condition will result. As we become more and more absorbed with our specialty —whether it is law, medicine, engineering, science, business or any one of the hundreds of other engrossing occupations—we cease to absorb the new knowledge that leads to new concepts. With the years, the mind narrows rather than broadens because we cease to stretch it by exploring the great subjects of philosophy, government, religion—the great humanities which have produced our great men and great thought.

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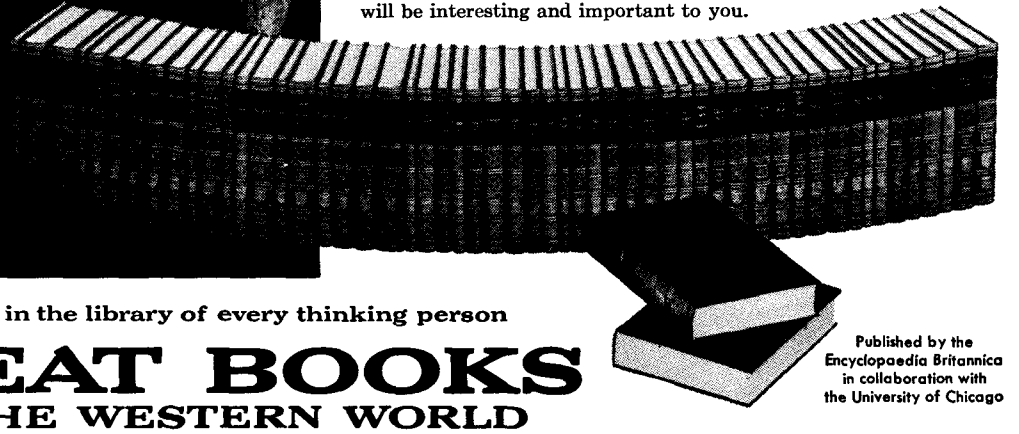

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WHO— WHAT— WHY—

As **Max Ascoli** points out in his editorial, this magazine has always insisted that Northerners have no cause to be smug about the battle over racial integration in public schools that is raging throughout the South. The problem is much more complicated—and sometimes more tragic for the kids involved—than all the passionate polemics of adults, both Northerners and Southerners, can possibly indicate. In this issue we describe a case quite close to home that raises basic issues about race relations and public education in New York City. The city was in the midst of a newspaper strike when the case reached a climax; and many of our readers may be learning about it for the first time. **Marya Mannes** has spent the last several weeks interviewing the parties concerned and visiting the Harlem schools that have been at the center of the affair.

BACK IN 1940, when John Gunther wrote his *Inside Latin America*, he had the following to say about Fulgencio Batista, then unchallenged ruler of Cuba:

"*On the positive side Batista's qualities are many and considerable. . . . He hates cruelty. This is a quite genuine trait, and it is important because Cuban politics—until Batista—have been spattered with blood. Batista has never killed anybody. Both his coups were bloodless. There has not been a single execution in his seven years of power. Nor is there a single political prisoner in Cuba. . . . Another quality, and perhaps the most important of them all, is his sense of kinship with the common people. . . . His ambition is to educate the masses.*"

This reminder that Batista, too, was once a popular enemy of dictatorship is perhaps useful at this moment, when Fidel Castro has assumed power in Cuba by overthrowing a dictator (the aforementioned Señor Batista). There is no doubt that Castro's revolution was on the whole popular with the American public. There is also no doubt that as a result of the recent summary executions in Cuba, his popularity here is beginning to waver, although it is certainly too early to reach any final conclusions about him. In any event, the attitudes of *norteamericanos* are less important than an understanding of Castro's revolution itself—who supported it, why, and to what purpose. **Karl E. Meyer** who in this issue reports on the Cuban revolution, is a member of the staff of the Washington *Post and Times Herald*, and writes regularly on Latin American affairs for that paper. His report is based on interviews with Castro and his followers, as well as with other well-informed people in Cuba.

Peter Schmid is an inveterate world traveler and reporter, some of whose articles have previously appeared in *The Reporter*. His account of how things are going in Afghanistan is particularly interesting because it is in some ways more difficult for the West to learn about recent development there than in many countries behind the Iron Curtain.

PRACTITIONERS of the dismal science who feel that we Americans have a tendency merrily to get into debt probably view with alarm the fact that a man with one of the new credit cards can simply sign his name for practically anything that strikes his eye, from a lobster dinner to a set of snow tires. Actually, as Contributing Editor **Robert Bendiner** points out in this issue, the number of people who make use of the new gimmick is so far fairly limited, as is the number of weeks their credit holds out. Their consumption is probably more conspicuous than it is important to the economy as a whole. . . . **John R. Thompson,** formerly Associate Professor of Law at Yale, is a member of the Washington, D.C. and Supreme Court bars. . . . **Cynthia Grenier** contributes to English, French, and German film publications. . . . **Alfred Kazin, Norman Podhoretz,** and **Nat Hentoff** are regular contributors to our "Views & Reviews" department.

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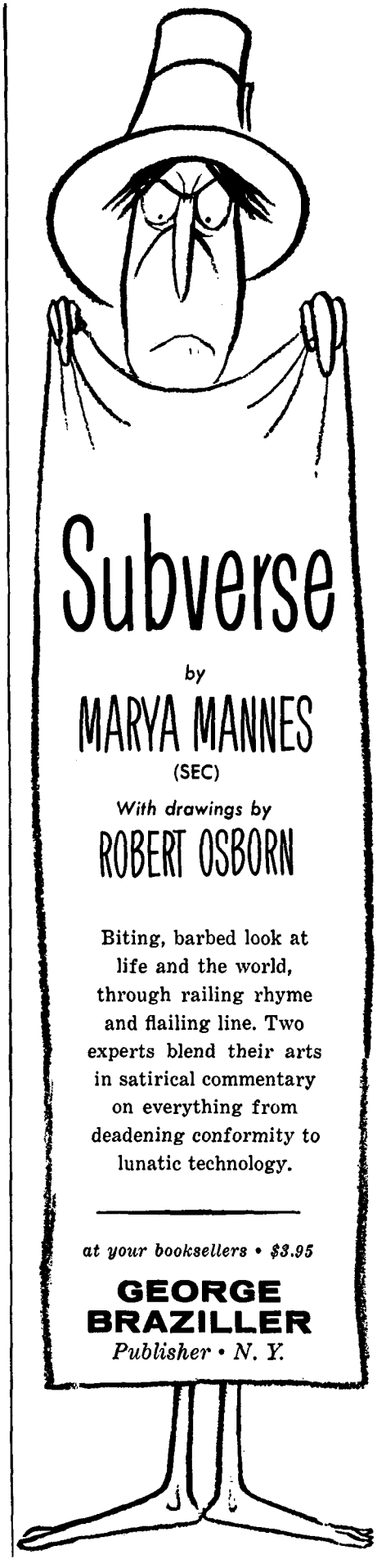
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The Bonds Shall Not Break

EVER SINCE the beginning of Southern evasion or defiance of the Supreme Court decisions on the desegregation of the schools, those of us in the North who advocated compliance could not help feeling that their civic virtue was neither costly nor risky. Or at least, to avoid hiding behind the editorial "we," I felt keenly and painfully embarrassed by the good fortune of being a New Yorker.

Now, however, the racial conflict has caught up with me. It affects people who are my friends, whites and Negroes. It concerns the kind of education that children, who happen to be colored, get in a section of New York City called Harlem. Ever since there has been a Negro Harlem, the education that children get there has admittedly been poor, and this fact has recently been dramatized by a judicial decision, as the following article explains.

ONE THING, however, must be said immediately: in New York outraged racial feeling is the sad privilege of the Negroes. Impelled by old and legitimate resentments, or by ignorance and misery, or by the ranting of demagogues, the Negroes can be driven into a united front against the whites. But anything like the White Citizens' Councils is not even remotely conceivable here in New York.

There are still evil habits and mean practices of discrimination that have been somehow blunted but not erased by the law. But there is no deliberate, organized will to keep the Negroes down, or, as it sometimes is said by Southerners, in their place. No amount of Negro anger could ever create such a will. Rather, whenever Negro anger makes itself felt, it creates a shock and then a sense among white people that varies from self-consciousness to shame. Again I will not say in the "white" community, for there is no such thing.

There is no such thing because New York is too big, it has had to assimilate too many different kinds and races of peoples. This assimilation, which has been made largely possible by the fact that people have the right to vote, is usually described by the trite expression "melting pot" —a term that may have some meaning only if we remember that there have been huge differentials in the rate at which the melting of the various groups has proceeded. Ours is a society of equals in the sense that the chance of self-improvement is open to all those who can overcome the varying handicaps of the groups to which they belong.

The Negroes in New York are determined to have their handicaps reduced. Yet in the present crisis—which is largely centered, as in the case of the Negroes throughout the rest of the country, on equality of education—it must be remembered that the so-called Negro community is an extraordinarily American community, composed of a very large number of different types and strains. Resentment over the various handicaps imposed on the Negroes may weld them together. But in the process the demagogues, those professionals in fomenting passions, tend to acquire the upper hand. This inevitably is registered and resented by the more enlightened and responsible Negroes. With those men, we who happen to be white and who are their friends must not lose contact. Indeed, we must not let our friendship be even slightly weakened—even when they are suspicious of us and doubt our good will.

We who are white can well afford being reasonable; but we must also be firm, never losing sight of the fact that conflict between honestly held ideas is nothing but the test of friendship. So, for instance, we can maintain—or at least I do—that while the standards of education in the predominantly Negro schools, as in all the city's public schools, must be radically and steadily improved, it is absurd and self-defeating to rely too heavily on the schools for the elimination of the abuses under which the Negroes have suffered. Certainly it is not by courtroom battles, or by keeping children away from schools, that education for the Negroes can be improved.

THIS MEANS that the causes of the present unrest must be dealt with decisively by our public officials and by all responsible men, Negro or white, in positions of authority. No matter what some overexcited Negro leaders may say, New York is not Little Rock—Nelson Rockefeller and Robert Wagner have no more in common with Orval Faubus than with Anastas Mikoyan. The present crisis can be, and I do believe must be, weathered. Then others will come. But if we are honest with each other, Negro and white, New York now and in the future can set an example for the whole nation.

At this point I do not feel like adding what I think would be utterly irrelevant, namely, that we must fear the opinion of foreign peoples if we fail to act wisely, or that we are in danger of losing the right to concern ourselves with injustice abroad. Let it be said only that the sense of duty toward our nation, and toward our own conscience, must be enough to prompt us if we care for our self-respect.

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School Trouble in Harlem

MARYA MANNES

THIS PAST September, when the New York City schools opened, eight families in Harlem announced dramatically that they weren't having any. The schools their children were to attend—specifically, Junior High Schools 120, 136, and 139—were, they declared, educationally inferior to those in which most of the pupils were white; and they had decided not to put up any longer with this discriminatory situation. It was not until the end of October that they were subpoenaed for violating the state's compulsory-education law. Most of the parents appeared before Justice Nathaniel Kaplan in Manhattan Domestic Relations Court on October 28, at which time the Justice complied with their attorney's request for a postponement in order to allow time enough for preparation of the cases. Simultaneously, two of the families were pleading their cases before Justice Justine Wise Polier of the Bronx Domestic Relations Court. On December 3, Justice Kaplan found four of his defendants guilty as charged, but postponed sentencing until December 16. One day before that deadline, Justice Polier found her defendants innocent, on the ground that the education offered their children was in fact inferior. The other parents' attorney then asked Justice Kaplan to reconsider. He agreed to do so. The board of education, in the meantime, filed an appeal against Justice Polier's verdict. And the parents Justice Kaplan found guilty gave notice that *they* might appeal his decision.

Those are the bare legal bones of the story. The story itself, of course, has much more to it than a legal skeleton.

A Waltz, an Open Door

A visitor at JHS 136 on Edgecombe Avenue at 135th Street would wonder what all the fuss was about. True, the girls in this junior high school are all Negro or Puerto Rican, but the Polier decision itself conceded that the racial composition of JHS 136 was the result of *de facto*, as against deliberate, segregation—the ugly result of shifting populations, of declining neighborhoods taken over by low-income minority groups who have nowhere else to go. Behind the school, the streets are wide but desolate, the buildings crisscrossed with fire escapes, the windows unwashed, the shades tattered, and the cheap small shops on the ground floors alternate with blackened doorways and bars. Yet the junior high itself is big and so well built that its thirty-five years have left no appreciable signs of deterioration, either within or without. Since it faces a park on one side and broad streets on the others, sun and light pour into the windows of its classrooms.

To anyone familiar with *The Blackboard Jungle* and the many real evils and terrors that have invaded the New York public schools, the interior of this particular school seems surprisingly calm and well-ordered. The girls, most of them neatly groomed, walk through the wide corridors with little noise; the supervisors keep a watchful eye out for the mischievous. The atmosphere of the six or seven classrooms I visited was quiet and attentive. In one of them, a French class, a youngish white teacher with a bright and sensitive face was reviewing the phrases used the day before in a film documentary on the Gaspé Peninsula. At least a third of her charges were eager and responsive, flinging their hands up to answer, and the whole class repeated the French in high clear voices with obvious pride in their performance.

In a social-studies class, a male teacher was asking the girls to tell him the functions of the board of health in the matter of food inspection, and how the inspectors worked.

In a music class, a Negro teacher was conducting a group of fifteen violinists and cellists in some hymns. They were ragged, to say the least, and their pitch would have tortured Mitropoulos, but they were sawing away with almost desperate intensity. As a supervisor remarked, "Most of them had never touched an instrument until last year."

There were two remedial classes in session, one for the more severely retarded and one for the slow learners. The first was engaged in sewing under the supervision of a woman, while the second was receiving individual instruction in various subjects.

IN THE GYMNASIUM, a fairly large group of girls were loosely assembled while a frenetic teacher attempted to teach some of them how to waltz. Three or four couples were clowning as they danced, keeping time but affecting a grotesque elegance. Most of the girls were just kidding around, and two rather sullen and untidy girls looked as if they could be disruptive. "These are girls who are difficult socially," the teacher said, "they're not necessarily retarded, they just find it hard to adjust—so we try to find means now and then to get them together more informally than in class."

In a large room near the principal's office, a girl was waiting to see a guidance counselor, two of whom, I was told, are in attendance.

"We are doing the best we can," said the principal, "under many difficulties and great pressures. We did not choose this school to be segregated, for one thing, and none of us

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finds this a desirable situation. It just happened; the neighborhood is a segregated one. We are short of teachers—we have eighty-five for 1,550 children—but a number of schools are even worse off. The building is old, but far better kept than a number of others in the city. We have five assistant principals and a wonderful program of supervision that has kept us free of any disciplinary troubles for the last three years. Our teachers are dedicated, and we think our girls like coming here. Naturally, we would like to do better; we must always do better. But we do take pride in the thought that for six hours a day we are opening doors that have been shut to most of these kids before."

Why Are 'Y' Schools Better?

A recent report in the *Teachers Guild Bulletin* backs up the principal's claims. The Guild chapter chairman of JHS 136 cites these facts about the school:

¶ Special coaching is given to students who wish to enter the academic (as against technical or vocational) high schools.

¶ School clubs help prepare students for entrance to the School of Performing Arts, at the High School of Music and Art, and the High School of Industrial Art.

¶ Teachers stay after school to give help in arithmetic, foreign languages, and reading.

¶ Many pupils have received help even after they were in senior high school.

¶ Teachers obtained scholarship aid for many of the students.

¶ Teachers in the school have made a determined effort to improve reading through special conferences.

¶ Teachers conducted a workshop to orient teachers newly appointed to the school.

¶ Teachers at JHS 136 have continued their own education. The number of graduate degrees held by faculty members belies the label of inadequate preparation and compares favorably with other junior high schools.

¶ The school has a pupil-teacher ratio of about 19 to 1, against city-wide registrations averaging about twenty-three per class. There is at least one remedial-reading period per class per week under licensed and experienced personnel, and there are three advisers per grade.

NEVERTHELESS, this school and others like it in Manhattan have for long been the object of bitter criticism. And, indeed, in recent years there have been a few significant improvements. But a new aspect of the debate was introduced by a report requested by the board of education to the Public Education Association and prepared by New York University's Research Center for Human Relations. It was called "The Quality of Education Offered to Majority and Minority Children in New York City's Public Schools." Published in August, 1955, it was followed two months later by a more condensed report presented to the board of education's Commission on Integration. The facts these reports assembled pointed to the conclusion that the educational opportunities offered in "X" schools, with predominantly Negro and Puerto Rican student bodies, were indeed inferior to those of the "Y," or predominantly "continental white," schools. (The "Xs" and "Ys" are part of the academic formulas of the reports.) Moreover, the disparity took on graver dimensions because almost three-quarters of the city's 639 elementary and junior high schools were almost exclusively attended by nonwhite and Puerto Rican pupils.

THESE were the findings: Although the buildings of Group "X," or nonwhite schools, were on the average larger than those of the "Y" schools, they were considerably older and not so well maintained. The average age of an "X" junior high school, for instance, was thirty-five years, as against fifteen years for a "Y" school.

In the matter of teacher competence, if tenure or probationary and substitute status can be taken as measures of competency, Group "X" schoolteachers are not as competent as the "Y" teachers because fewer of them are "regulars" and more of them probationary or substitutes.

In the opinion of the authors of these reports, the most crucial question of all was: Is the average per pupil achievement in Group "X" schools the same as in Group "Y" schools? The answer is "No," especially in the standardized tests in reading and arithmetic. This would seem to point to the conclusion that the students in "X" schools are being inadequately prepared for further studies. The reports temper this conclusion, however, by saying that it is unfair to judge the success of teaching on reading and arithmetic tests alone. And the schools themselves have countered by suggesting that the children in Group "X" schools simply (and as a matter of fact that has little to do with the quality of the instruction) do not test as high in general-ability tests as children in the "Y" schools, and that the teachers have done as well as, or better than, might be expected. Since thirty-five per cent of the "X" schools' families earned less than $2,000 a year, and since there is a known correlation between coming from a low-income family and getting low grades, it is argued that the results are neither surprising nor sinister.

On the vital matter of segregation itself, the reports concluded that there is no significant evidence to indicate that ethnic separation is seriously considered in drawing school-district boundary lines. Members of the board of education, in fact, cite a number of instances in recent years where positive efforts were made to promote integration by establishing schools in fringe areas. "They even did some gerrymandering to juggle the lines," said a teacher. On the other hand, there certainly was considerable evidence that some white parents would falsify addresses, use political pressure, and deliberately confuse zoning divisions to avoid sending their children to predominantly Negro and Puerto Rican schools.

Enter Mr. Zuber

To the Negro communities of New York, the reports were hardly news. Complaints to the board of education about the state of public schools in Harlem had been made at regular intervals since 1934, but in those earlier days the Negroes had neither the political nor the social strength to breach the walls of bureaucracy and to force action. Letters and petitions were pigeonholed with the bland assurance "We'll look into it." Providing public education for such

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a heterogeneous population as New York's was the chronic and paramount headache; and although the board has always had members acutely aware of the dangers of substandard education for those minority groups which could not afford private schools and which were not free to move to the less crowded suburbs, it was not until the Supreme Court decision and the wave of investigations following it that New York began to discover the subtler forms of discrimination which plague its schools as a direct result of the *de facto* segregation of its neighborhoods and its housing. No one was more aware of this or more consistently active in exposing it than Dr. Kenneth B. Clark, Negro educator and professor of psychology at City College, whose analysis of the psychological effects of segregation in the South contributed significantly to the thinking behind the Supreme Court decision on school integration and whose testimony played a large part in buttressing the conclusions of the Polier decision.

"It is my considered judgment and opinion," Dr. Clark testified, ". . . that the segregated school and the general characteristics usually found associated with segregated schools depress the ability of children to learn. . . . it is my personal judgment that subtle attitudinal factors may be as important, if not more important, than the more measurable, concrete deficiencies which are usually found associated with segregated schools. . . ."

While Dr. Clark and other educational leaders have been pressing their arguments on the board of education, forcing the sluggish body of bureaucracy to bestir itself, others in the Negro community have used the situation in the schools as the focus for a campaign of agitation in the Harlem community. Among them have been writers in the local Negro press, Judge Hubert Delaney, formerly of the Domestic Relations Court, and, most aggressively, a young Negro lawyer and Republican politician named Paul Zuber.

THE SON of a postal employee who came from Pennsylvania, Zuber has a powerful build, a persuasive voice, and a quiet manner that almost, but not quite, muffles the steady beat of self-assertion. Formerly in the legal department of the board of health, Zuber ran unsuccessfully for state senator in 1956 and was admitted to the bar a year later.

He tells how he became actively involved in the Harlem school situation when he helped sponsor a meeting about it in 1956, at which twelve parents formed the nucleus for a Parents Committee for Better Education; later it recruited four hundred Negro parents. From then on, Zuber helped to organize a series of complaints to Mayor Robert F. Wagner and to the board of education which, he said, received only token attention and failed to inspire any action. It is significant that, throughout, Zuber has moved ahead on his own, without the support of the N.A.A.C.P. or the various civic organizations in which Negroes and whites are working constantly for solutions to the city's school problem. "I'm a maverick," he has said.

In September, 1958, when the board of education came out with the final report of the Commission on Integration, Zuber says that Mrs. Viola Waddy "summoned" him to a meeting of parents and told him of their decision to take their children out of school rather than submit them to what they felt was inferior education. Since Zuber himself had been working for precisely such an eventuality, there is some skepticism about as to who "summoned" whom. Anyway, he claims to have warned the parents of the possible consequences of their act of defiance. But, he said, they stood firm: they would not send their children to these schools. Instead, they retained him as counsel and prepared to fight it out.

ORIGINALLY a total of eight families were involved. Besides Mrs. Waddy, there were Mr. and Mrs. Skipwith, Mr. and Mrs. Rector, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Prioleau, Mr. and Mrs. Livingston Bryant, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Ware, Mrs. Dorothy Brown, and Mrs. Mae Mallory. When the junior high schools opened, their children were not there. Instead Zuber helped them set up a tutoring service in the Emanuel Sunday School, above a bar, and started to tutor the youngsters in mathematics, social studies, English, and French. Joining him were a former science teacher and Zuber's wife, a graduate of the Yale Art School, who taught them art. "They had five hours a week in all these subjects—much more than the school provided them," said Zuber, "and they learned fast too."

But troubles beset them. One was negative: the board of education didn't send anybody around for weeks—a deflating reaction to a bold gesture. The second was positive: the landlord threatened to evict them for using a Sunday school on weekdays. Because of this, they moved their "school" to the Mid-Harlem Community Parish at 123rd Street and Seventh Avenue.

It was not until well into the sec-

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ond month, at the end of October, that the parents who were still defying the state compulsory-education law were served with subpoenas by the board of education. There then followed the curious legal drama that was recounted at the opening of this article.

The Sources of Anger

The Negro newspapers had long been critical of the Harlem schools. But during the parents' "strike" they, and in particular the New York *Amsterdam News*, intensified their barrage in their news and editorial columns, pointing out "glaring deficiencies" in JHS 136 and JHS 139, from the lack of hot lunches to the lack of special progress groups. Most lurid and vituperative were the columns of James L. Hicks. Here is a sample of his style: "There is in this Big Town of ours a large number of white people who feel that they can spit in a Negro's face and nothing will be done about it. . . . They go around figuratively spitting in the face of helpless Negroes, and then they yell bloody murder when the *Amsterdam News* gets into the fight on the side of the Negro."

Quite aside from the violence of the language, the "facts" cited in the *Amsterdam News* were hardly accurate in view of Justice Polier's own statement about the principal of JHS 136 that "the Court was deeply impressed by his sincere devotion to the welfare of the children in his school and by his efforts to secure a staff sufficient in number and adequate in skill," and in view of the fact that a large proportion of the specific accusations brought against JHS 136 by both parents and counsel were found invalid during the course of the principal's six-hour testimony, and were dismissed.

THE EFFECT of this kind of unbridled criticism in the *Amsterdam News* and by free-wheeling agitators on the staff and teachers of Junior High School 136 can be imagined. It could only further depress the sorely tried morale of people constantly aware of the odds against which they worked and the needs which remained unfulfilled. "It's one thing," said a teacher, "to spotlight a situation that needs correction, but it's another to misrepresent it. Teaching is hard enough under normal pressures.

"We have to teach girls between twelve and fifteen—the most difficult years of adolescence—who come from very low-income families a great proportion of which are broken. No father, usually, or too many fathers. There are no books in these homes, no paintings, no magazines—only TV and comics. They get no cultural stimulation of any sort, very little help or encouragement. They live in congested tenements in streets with six bars to a block. Dope is a familiar word and addiction a familiar sight. 'You can't stop that,' a twelve-year-old told me the other day.

"Pregnancy among our fourteen-year-olds and fifteen-year-olds is not an unusual condition. The other day one of the mothers of our girls came in to show us the girl's infant. 'Isn't Ella May's baby cute?' she said.

"Too many of our girls are suffering from physical and psychological difficulties due to prenatal or postnatal neglect. This in turn slows up or warps their intellectual capacity. They need special help, and a lot of it. Much more, in fact, than privileged children.

"When our guidance counselors ask the girls what their main problem is, the most common answer is this: 'to get from the vestibule to the apartment'—by which they mean without being molested.

"And in spite of this, and the handicaps that dog them, so many of them are nice, decent, likable girls."

An assistant principal chimed in: "The encouraging thing is how much better they are than their mothers. It's a constant progression forward."

But a slow one, they agreed. And here, of course, is the reason Negro patience has long since worn thin. Harlem's Negroes want tangible evidence that progress is going to be speeded up. Despite the demagogic oversimplifications of the Negro press, many parents in Harlem are well aware of the schools' difficulties; but they feel that the detailed explanation of these difficulties is only too often an excuse for doing nothing—or precious little—about them.

Speaking of the Polier decision, Dr. Clark said, "There is jubilation among Negro parents." But jubilation is not the word I would have used to describe the mood of the parents of one "boycott" girl and the mother of another whom I visited in Harlem.

A Question of Motivation

The Bryants live in a fairly new housing development on Madison Avenue at 139th Street. A high wind had blown litter against all the low privet hedges and the winter patches of grass around the buildings. But it was not the wind that had deposited beer cans and bottles against the corners of walls. Nor had it broken the wired glass in the doorway of their building. These buildings already had the bleak look of neglect that presages the slum.

The small Bryant flat itself was neat and clean, the living room ruled by the monarch, television, and decorated with a few colorful calendar prints, the kitchen hung with clothes that Mrs. Bryant was washing. She is a woman of dignity and a certain sadness. Her husband, a postal employee, is a slim, wiry, intense man, highly articulate. They were joined, shortly after I was seated, by Mrs. Prioleau, whose daughter had also been kept out of JHS 136.

When I asked them whether they weren't pleased with their victory in the Skipwith-Rector decision, Mrs. Bryant said, "Well, we're really thinking about the next step—what's going to happen to our children." The tutoring classes were now held in rotation in their homes so that their whereabouts would not be readily disclosed.

Yes, the children were learning well, and some had made great strides with this special schooling, but they missed school and the other children. It was not easy for them.

"We've told them that they're doing this for a larger purpose, for the sake of a principle. They're doing it so that other children can get a better education in the end."

I asked them what their main criticism of JHS 136 as a school was, and they answered with one voice: "Lack of motivation."

"They don't have any incentive

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to learn," said Mr. Bryant. "School is just sort of fun, a way of passing time. They should have a serious education; they ought to be made to learn, to live up to standards." Mr. and Mrs. Bryant spoke of their schooling in New York—Mrs. Bryant had gone to 136 herself—and they insisted that the standards were higher then than they are now.

"A lot of what they do is a joke," said Mrs. Prioleau—"all this business of 'Lady of the Week' and 'Every Inch a Lady.' It's a joke." She was speaking of a campaign conducted by the principal of the junior high for deportment and manners: the corridors and classrooms were hung with signs like "A Lady Is Punctual," "A Lady Is Neat," and every week a winner was chosen by her classmates for embodying the desired qualities.

"It all starts in the elementary schools in Harlem," said Mr. Bryant. "They don't teach the kids what they ought to learn, so they fall behind. By the time they reach junior high or high school they're so far behind they never catch up. It isn't only the lack of qualified teachers, it's the whole program of education. They don't give them standards."

Illustrations by Joseph Papin

I ASKED THEM whether it wasn't true that some children, both black and white, started out with much less preparation for learning than others, that they might progress at a slower rate and not keep up with the more privileged kids in more educated families.

"Sure," said Mr. Bryant, "but they need more teaching, not less. They need motivation." The word kept recurring.

They were derisive about different levels of learning and "special approaches." And they were wholly scornful of former Superintendent William Jansen in particular. "He was as fit to be superintendent of schools as I am to be head of UNESCO," said Mr. Bryant, though he conceded that Jansen's successor, Dr. John J. Theobald, was trying to improve matters.

Throughout this conversation I was impressed by the fact that the complaint of these parents was not specifically against the conditions in JHS 136 that prompted Justice Polier's decision—primarily the lack of regular teachers—but applied to the entire system of public education, and to the methods of progressive education especially. I have heard many white parents echo them.

They were specific, though, in saying that girls who graduated from JHS 136 weren't qualified to go to the better high schools, and they mentioned a school every Negro concerned with education refers to as a symbol of exclusion: the Bronx High School of Science. "Why is it," said Bryant angrily, "that none of our kids ever get in there? Don't tell me there aren't any with the intellectual capacity; they're just not prepared for it, they're not given a chance."

I did not repeat what an educator fully aware of the deficiencies of the Harlem junior high schools said about this: "All the very brightest kids in the public school system of New York apply for the Bronx High School of Science. It's the stiffest kind of competition, and dozens of very promising white kids don't make it every year."

And a teacher said, "They don't like to admit this, but the student body of Bronx High School of Science is largely Jewish—not through any policy, God forbid, but simply because Jewish kids always had great motivation to learn. It's nothing new."

"When Negroes talk of the very low percentage of their race that are prepared to enter college in New York," said another educator—"less than one-half of one per cent, I think—they forget that fifty years ago a very low percentage of Irish or Italian boys got into college. Each year their own percentage will rise as more and more of their children are educated."

But the Negroes have suffered too much from their past and their present to be consoled with expressions of good will. They feel that they have been offered half a loaf for so long that their choice is clear: nothing but the whole loaf is acceptable. The argument that none of the children in New York's public schools, and in particular its junior high schools, gets a whole loaf does not impress them: the predominantly white schools get more bread. And no matter how you slice it, that's discrimination.

'A Teacher Is Not a Policeman'

A great many observers agree with Justice Polier's assertion, which is by

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no means original with her, that "analysis of the data submitted on teacher assignment shows a city-wide pattern of discrimination against X Junior High Schools . . . . A far greater percentage of positions in the X schools were not filled by regularly licensed teachers." And she is supported in many educational circles when she points out that "The educational requirements for a regularly licensed teacher are substantially higher than for a substitute teacher."

The Polier decision lays the blame directly at the door of the board of education, charging it with discriminatory policy in the assigning of teachers. "So long as non-white or X schools have a substantially smaller proportion of regularly licensed teachers than white or Y schools, discrimination and inferior education, apart from that inherent in residential patterns, will continue. . . . The Board of Education has done substantially nothing to rectify a situation it should never have allowed to develop, for which it is legally responsible. . . ." By not insisting on such assignments it is deliberately, if passively, guilty of discrimination. Teachers, Justice Polier went on to say, should be assigned as police are assigned: on the basis of need and not on the basis of their own choice or convenience. "The Board of Education can no more plead not guilty than could the Police Commissioner if he allowed patrolmen to choose not to accept dangerous or unpleasant assignments."

YET the assistant superintendent in charge of personnel for the junior high school division testified to the great dearth of regularly licensed teachers available for junior high schools throughout the city; thirty-four per cent of the teaching positions are listed as vacancies and are filled by substitutes. In addition, a member of the Public Education Association pointed out, "The whole business of assignments is in chaos—a prey to any number of factors from special influence and privilege to personal choice, age, district, and so forth. Until a decent policy is adhered to we'll get nowhere."

But, in view of the teacher shortage, of the opportunities available to qualified teachers in nice new suburban schools, and of the opposition of the teachers' organizations to any system that entirely eliminates the exercise of teachers' preferences, a "rational" or "equitable" teacher assignment policy is easier to demand than to institute.

"RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, justified or not," said a teacher at JHS 136, "teachers prefer to teach in an integrated school which is predominantly white than in a segregated or 'difficult' school. True, some dedicated few do deliberately choose to teach in Harlem schools—and they ought not to be forgotten; but many others prefer otherwise. There are many reasons for this. Whatever they are, they affect the teacher's choice, when he has one—and he very often has these days. You can't compare a teacher to a policeman. It's all very well to talk of rotation and assignments, but when you get a good teacher who's happy in his job and in his school and tell him he's got to go somewhere where he doesn't want to go, you run the risk of losing him altogether.

"Perhaps," he added ruefully, "we should all be wholly dedicated, but most of us are human: we function best in a school we like with a principal we respect and students who respond most fully."

He made the general statement, echoed by other teachers, that most of them preferred either elementary schools or high schools to junior high schools of whatever racial composition, for not only were their students then at the most tricky and troublesome age of all but they were midway between the two most desirable conditions of learning: the beginning, when children could be set upon the right path, and the end of childhood, when their potentialities were most visible.

"As for not wanting to teach in segregated schools, a major factor is the move of teachers away from the city to the suburbs. They can't afford city rents and they want to bring their children up in a better environment. So naturally they prefer to teach either in their vicinity or at least at a city school which they can reach without too long or too hard a trip. The segregated—the most congested—areas are usually furthest from where most teachers live."

He spoke of pregnancy leave, and how the young mother-teachers when they return to work avoid the "difficult" schools; of the withdrawal of older experienced teachers to the suburbs; of the yearly promotion of regular teachers from junior high schools to senior high schools and the immense difficulty of finding qualified teachers to replace them.

Teachers, he said, would not be likely to share the Polier assumption that regular teachers are better than substitute teachers, even though the board itself established the criterion and the difference.

"I've worked with some substitutes who were far better teachers than some regular ones. How does it happen? Well, you can have a fine academic background and ten years of experience and still be a substitute merely because you haven't passed the speech exam: your accent is markedly Southern, say, or foreign. Or a regular woman teacher can resign to raise a family and then come back later to teach as a substitute. Even the Commission on Integration report left this judgment suspended: *'If,'* it said, *'If* tenure, probationary and substitute status are measures of competency . . .' "

The charge of "inferior education" was, of course, largely based on this measurement. However, I brought the JHS 136 man back to the other charge, echoed so forcefully by the Bryants, that the teachers in segregated schools lowered their standards instead of trying to bring the children up to them.

"I wouldn't call it a lowering of standards—I'd say we tried to give the children what they were ready to absorb. You can give some children 'The Ancient Mariner' to read, while others of the same age are completely lost with it; it doesn't mean anything to them. You get a teacher who comes into a school like this and applies a rigidly maintained curriculum, and before you know it she's lost half her class—she can't get through to the kids. You have to establish communication first of all before the learning process starts; it isn't a question of simply handing down from on top.

"If we did that," he went on, "and a large proportion of the chil-

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dren just fell by the wayside, these same parents would be the first to cry foul. They won't, quite understandably, face the fact that the home and community affect the child's aptitudes at the start. A kid brought up in a segregated slum gets off to a slower start than a kid brought up in a home with some cultural interest, however small. It's all bound together—the way they live and the way they learn, and the school will improve when the community does. You can't expect the school to operate alone."

THERE is no question in the minds of the board of education, of the citizens' groups most concerned with the problem, and of the parents involved that segregation—even if involuntary—is deplorable. But they are also agreed that the concept of the neighborhood school, on which the whole public school system is based, must be maintained. Reason demands that the school be a part of the community in which it is situated, easily accessible to the children and reflecting their needs. And very few advise such artificial and disruptive devices to speed integration as the transportation of children, either Negro or white, by bus or subway from their neighborhood to a school in another community.

Yet, despite this large area of agreement, and despite the noncontroversial character of most of the facts on which the Polier decision was based, this decision itself has created sharp and painful divisions. Even Negro leaders not involved in the agitation that led up to the Polier decision have been moved to feel that those who oppose this decision are refusing to help eliminate the inequities that gave rise to it. And although most responsible Negro and white civic leaders give measured expression to their positions on either side, the long history of frustration can explode in statements like that of the Reverend Gardner C. Taylor, the only Negro on the board of education. After it voted to appeal the decision, he said that "Wittingly or unwittingly, the board has erased the last line of difference between Little Rock and New York."

Dr. Taylor, in a statement to *The Reporter*, later qualified his analogy between Little Rock and New York: "In New York, Negroes play a role in the political life of the community, while in Little Rock and other Southern communities which are fighting to maintain segregation, they are completely excluded." Nevertheless, in a sermon at the Concord Baptist Church where he preaches, he later said that the board's plan to appeal "marked a dark victory for all the daemonic influences loose in our society" and would make it easier for the South to block school integration.

At the same time, such distinguished Negro educators as Dr. Kenneth Clark himself and Dr. John Hope Franklin of Brooklyn College know that the kind of racial discrimination

that still blights areas of New York City is a pale receding shadow of the Southern darkness. "It exists, of course," said Dr. Franklin, "and you can't be a Negro in New York without recognizing it. But to compare anything here with Little Rock just doesn't make sense."

YET despite these far from unimportant differences in rhetoric and tone, all the leaders of New York's Negro community are agreed on certain essentials. They all, it goes without saying, dislike the idea of keeping children away from school, of seeing them lose time they can ill afford to spare. They are also united in regarding any move to appeal against the Polier decision as one more evasion of a long-neglected responsibility. And they have in common, too, the fear that, if this issue is allowed to fester during the coming months, it will be captured and exploited by "activist" demagogues: Representative Adam Clayton Powell has already declared that he will try to amend the Federal school-construction bill so as to withhold aid from New York City as a "segregated school district." It is not without significance that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People did not get involved in this case until after the board of education had said it would appeal the Polier decision. Nor is it any less significant that the N.A.A.C.P. is now fully determined to defend the decision up to the Supreme Court if necessary.

Just about every aspect of this whole affair is fraught with unpleasant possibilities. A prolonged court fight up to the highest level would only serve to hearten Southern racists. The board of education certainly does not relish being put in the position of taking legal action against parents who are demanding better education for their children, but neither does it relish having parents freely challenging the compulsory-education law of the state. Above all, those citizens—Negro and white—who have been fighting together against race prejudice and discrimination are faced with the appalling prospect that their interracial organizations will be utterly disrupted; for the Negro community will certainly insist that they "stand up and be counted" for or against the Polier decision, and many white educationists and civic leaders are reluctant to get entangled in so dubious a legal battle.

As this article goes to press, strenuous efforts at conciliation are being made. The board of education may decide to drop its appeal against the Polier decision, while the Kaplan decision may not lead to anyone's being sentenced; a court fight could be avoided; and something would be done immediately about New York's teacher-assignment policy. Whether a compromise is possible, after the wheels of the law have been set in motion, is not clear. But what is clear is that a great deal is at stake, and that a continuation of the conflict would be an American tragedy.

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Who Won What In Cuba?

KARL E. MEYER

How Fidel Castro became the best-known Latin American in this country—surely only Juan Perón and the Trujillos *père* and *fils* could give him a contest—constitutes a minor epic in the history of the hemisphere. The Cuban revolution began inauspiciously. On December 2, 1956, Castro invaded the coast of eastern Cuba with a guerrilla force of eighty-one men crowded aboard a leaky Mexican yacht. His "invasion" was spotted from the air and the Cuban Army met the insurgents when they landed on the jungle shore, eliminating—I was told by Castro—all but twelve of the rebels.

Yet this was the nucleus of an army that ultimately grew to about 8,500, seized control of half the island, humbled one of the best-equipped military forces in the hemisphere, and sent President Fulgencio Batista fleeing to Ciudad Trujillo. Castro's story is a narrative worthy of Sabatini, Dumas, or Hemingway—but, let us be frank, with also just a slight flavor of *opéra bouffe*.

As with others who spring from Hispanic stock, it is the genius of the Cuban people that moments of epic heroism and national tragedy are leavened to some degree by the absurd. There was, for example, the time that the rebels impertinently kidnaped the world's leading auto racer, Juan Manuel Fangio of Argentina, right under the nose of Batista's police. Señor Fangio emerged from his ordeal no worse for wear, with a good-humored smile on his face and an immense pile of clippings for his scrapbook.

And who should stride before the footlights after the shooting was over to announce that he had spent the past months with the rebels? Who indeed but Errol Flynn, a little stouter perhaps than in his days of portraying Robin Hood, but with a thirst for melodrama still unquenched.

The Cuban revolution, in sum, violated many of the time-tested precepts of insurrection. It came during a period of unusual prosperity, and it was fought for the most part while tourism as usual prevailed. Last fall, I spent ten days in Santiago de Cuba, capital of the province that was the seat of the rebellion. The army ruled by truncheon; midnight killings and rebel reprisals were common. Castro's detachments made forays into the suburbs. Yet amidst this state of siege, I was able to charge my stay at the leading hotel on an American credit card. One wonders how Richard Harding Davis would have reacted to this report-now, pay-later arrangement for covering a revolution.

Yet all this—the heroic and the seriocomic—is properly the province of the dramatist. I would like to focus on three broader themes: the dilemmas of a hero in an organization age, the waning of the *caudillo*, and the plight of U.S. diplomacy in which every gain for freedom seems a paradoxical setback to the State Department.

The Obsolescence of Heroism

Our age has reason to assume all heroes guilty until proven innocent. In a century that has grown cynical about saviors armed with a sword, it is not surprising that Fidel Castro is regarded with equal parts of admiration and distrust. Cuba, to be sure, is only an island, but atrocities are as deplorable there as on a continent; Batista has given proof of that. Moreover, ours is an era of organization which has as its emblems the research team, the secretarial pool, and the group therapist. Our age dwells in bureaucratic halls, preaches the futility of revolt, and confines its taste for the epic to adult Westerns. Our dissenters tend to be either beat or glumly angry.

Castro has confounded the categories of his age, and for that he cannot easily be forgiven—or understood, for that matter. And yet surely one is still free to hope that this misguided heretic will become more than a captive lion on "Face the Nation," or just another tabloid-size dictator in our back yard.

In the United States, it would be regarded as a mild form of insanity for an ambitious young lawyer to jeopardize his career at its start by leading a quixotic revolt for republican ideals. And yet this is what Castro did shortly after he got his law degree at the University of Havana, a year after Batista had returned to power in a bloodless coup. Leading a band of a hundred youths, Castro attempted a commando-style capture of the military barracks in Santiago. The attack was bloodily repulsed; and Castro was caught, tried, and sentenced to fifteen years in prison. The date of the attack—July 26, 1953—provided the slogan for Castro's movement.

Freed from jail by a congressional amnesty, Castro took flight to Mexico and with the help of money from his wealthy sugar-planter father organized an army for an invasion. When the report came that Castro's invaders had been cut down by army bullets (and that Castro himself had been killed), even his friends sorrowfully concluded that the last had been heard from him. But Castro and a handful of followers took shelter in the peaks of the Sierra Maestra in Oriente Province. The rugged terrain proved an impregnable fortress against an apathetic army, while Batista's air supremacy was nullified because his planes were unable to spot rebel installations. Thus, by hit-and-run raids, Castro was able to expand his realm and ultimately bottle up the island's key sugar ports, striking at the heart of the Cuban economy.

His success would have been inconceivable without one essential

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factor: the support, either active or passive, of the great mass of citizens in Oriente, Castro's birthplace and the island's largest and richest province. This support for a youngster who brought his province economic hardship, and even misery, cut through all strata of Oriente's society.

Anyone who spent time, as I did, traveling around Oriente during the fighting can testify to the passionate quality of his backing. One instance remains vividly in my mind. In Santiago, I asked one of the city's wealthiest sugar planters, a self-made man whose holdings were largely in rebel-controlled areas, how he felt when Castro's forces set his fields afire and scorched his profits away, as they had done the year before. His reply in Spanish was succinct, immediate, and explosive: "I am enchanted."

Plainly one reason why Castro won such backing is that he was a symbol of resistance to an occupying army as brutal as it was venal. But it also was an eloquent tribute to the character of a leader whose guerrilla force was disciplined and relatively restrained.

I lived for ten days with rebel forces in the Sierra Maestra, and spent three days with Castro himself. For a guerrilla army composed of unpaid volunteers, many of them unlettered *guajiros* native to the hills, I was impressed by the tough-minded intelligence I found. As to Castro, I was struck by his tremendous vitality, his articulateness and wit, and his thoughtfulness—in roughly that order.

IN A LAND where most men are short and wiry, Castro is a six-footer whose energy is awesome; like all Latin Americans, Castro loves to talk, but unlike some, he talks exceedingly well—even in English, which he speaks with vigor if without grammar.

Indeed, he is a virtuoso in the art of personal communication: the intense look through owlish horn-rimmed glasses, the politician's amiable squeeze of the shoulder, the apt joke, and the studied concern with the listener's reaction. Combined with this is an indifference to physical surroundings: whether he is crouched in his shoebox-sized headquarters cabin or marching at the head of a column in clothes as shaggy as his beard, the stream of words is incessant and sharply articulate.

For a man who has spent most of the past decade in the twilight world of revolutionary activities, his thinking shows a surprisingly thoughtful bent. Castro has fought like a zealot, but in private conversation he does not talk like one. Anything but an inflexible doc-

trinaire, he struck me as speculative and pragmatic.

In politics, he has insisted that his crusade had a single objective: the restoration of a freely elected government in Cuba. Yet on such details as the role of political parties he has been unsatisfyingly ambiguous. In economics, he asserts that he has changed his mind about the virtues of nationalization and favors a program of moderate reform and welfare legislation. I asked him if he wanted a New Deal for Cuba.

"Yes," he drawled, "but if you write that, be sure to say *you* asked me whether I favored a New Deal for Cuba and I said 'Yes.' Otherwise, people would think I want to be the Franklin Roosevelt of Cuba." (Castro has repeatedly said he does not want to run for the presidency, pointing that he is too young to qualify under the constitution. Nonetheless, Castro's voice prevails in the provisional government led by his choice for president, former Judge Manuel Urrutia Lleo. The caliber of the new régime's ministers has been generally high, representing Cuba's more moderate elements.)

ON THE DEBIT SIDE, however, have been the rash acts of Castro's subordinates—and some rash statements from Castro himself. Doubtless revolutions are not namby-pamby affairs, but the hijacking of airplanes and the seizing of United States citizens are a strange way of winning friends and influencing Washington. More worrisome has been the victorious movement's insistence on vengeance. Last November, Castro threatened reprisals against all "traitors" who participated in a Batista-sponsored election, and the recent sentences of the revolutionary tribunals have certainly lived up to that promise. Castro's angry threat that if the United States tried to interfere with the executions by landing Marines—no one had suggested it—there would be "two hundred thousand gringos dead in the streets" may have been just "blowing off steam." But the cynics and some sniggering Habañeros are already betting that Castro will prove a counterfeit idealist. Perhaps they are right. Those who hope that the age of individualism has not altogether vanished hope time will show that Cuba will be a better place because Castro failed to become an organization man.

The Rotarian Revolution

If nothing else, the collapse of Batista draws attention to an admirably perverse phenomenon that is taking place in our back yard. Elsewhere in the so-called underdeveloped areas of the world, democratic governments are yielding to dictators—but in Latin America precisely the opposite tendency is evident.

Four years ago, nine of the twenty Latin-American republics were ruled by *caudillos;* today, only three dictators survive—and of these, only Generalissimo Rafael Trujillo of the Dominican Republic is without visible challenge. (But all men are mor-

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tal, and it is delicious to contemplate what life will be like in the Era of Trujillo, Jr., when *El Benefactor's* heir turns the Republic's postage stamps into a gallery of pinups.) The region's democratic tide began in Argentina in 1955, when Juan Perón fled into exile aboard a Paraguayan gunboat. In 1956, Manuel Odría of Peru voluntarily stepped down and Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua was assassinated. A year later, the Colombians rid themselves of Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, and in 1958 neighboring Venezuela overthrew Marcos Pérez Jiménez. And now Batista is following a well-worn itinerary via Ciudad Trujillo.

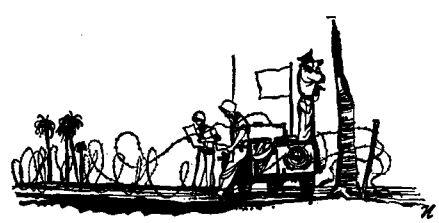
All this, to be sure, is a negative achievement and offers no guarantees that new men on horseback will not soon prance into power. But accompanying this decline of the *caudillo* has been an extraordinary sequence of free elections in which the opposition party has not only won at the polls but has peacefully taken office. Within the past few years, this has been true in countries as diverse as Costa Rica, Venezuela, Argentina, Chile, Honduras, Guatemala, and Uruguay. Meanwhile, Mexico continues its two decades of stable and reasonably free government under President Adolfo López Mateos. And in Colombia, after a decade of fratricide, the republic's two rival parties have joined forces behind President Alberto Lleras Camargo, one of the hemisphere's most esteemed liberal statesmen.

ONE INTERESTING aspect of this steady democratic evolution in Latin America has been the aggressively anti-dictatorial position the Catholic Church has taken, notably in Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela. Even in Cuba, where the Church has traditionally been timid in politics, the hierarchy remained officially neutral in the civil war while the lower clergy and Catholic Action groups actively sided with the rebels.

But more fundamental has been the changing structure of society in most Latin-American countries. The region is in a ferment of economic growth, and one consequence has been the growing influence of Latin America's nascent middle classes. Another result has been the emergence of trade unions and a militant labor leadership pressing for swifter change.

In Cuba, it is unthinkable that Castro could have waged his revolution without the support of the island's growing, if still small, professional and middle class. My contact with the rebel forces—I can record his name now—was Mariano Roca, a developer and appliance dealer who was an officer in both the Rotary and the Lions clubs. The man who undertook grave risks by smuggling me through the army lines to meet Castro was a General Motors dealer. Néstor Hernández, owner of the largest ice plant in Santiago, took equal risks in hiding me upon my return.

Everywhere I traveled in Cuba during the civil war, I found the most thoughtful and articulate supporters (and sympathetic critics) of Castro's movement precisely among groups that had the most to risk in a time of turmoil and anarchy. Although the labor movement remained lukewarm toward Castro until the closing battles, country clubs in Havana were frequently the rendezvous of rebel sympathizers.



Indeed, the medical profession was in the front ranks of the opposition to Batista. Some of Cuba's leading doctors joined Castro's forces in the hills; the four hospitals built under their supervision were the first established in the primitive back country of Oriente. Almost a year ago medical men took the lead in framing a manifesto condemning the Batista government that was signed by forty-two of the island's religious, professional, and civic organizations. In December physicians openly refused to celebrate their traditional holiday as a protest against the "barbarisms" of the Batista régime.

Because of this strong middle-class complexion of the Castro movement, the charges that the insurgents were the harbingers of Communism has seemed a wry joke to those who were familiar with the rebellion's unlikely recruits. But not only does his bourgeois support seem a barrier against Communism; it also holds hope that whatever course Castro may take, the pull of Cuba's democratic tide will be steady and strong.

What Are We Afraid Of?

Like their counterparts elsewhere in Latin America, the Cuban middle classes are in revolt against the whole tradition of government that has held the region in thrall. Graft, favoritism, police brutality, profligate waste of public funds, neglect of education, and rule by military and landed oligarchs—all these are the venerable afflictions which the emerging Latin middle class seeks to eliminate or at least moderate. Is there anything on this agenda that should cause panic in the long corridors of the State Department?

Yet there's the rub. In Cuba as elsewhere in the hemisphere, the United States has frequently been caught in a melancholy posture of embarrassment when its good neighbors to the south overthrow a dictator and enlarge liberty's realm. Why this should be so is a puzzle that fully deserves the investigation of a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee that is now under way.

It must be noted, of course, that the predominant position of the United States during Cuba's revolution was cautious neutrality. Last March 14, the State Department clamped an embargo on the shipment of arms to either side, a step that pinched the Batista régime far more than the rebels, who were adept at smuggling. But few Cubans today believe that our policy was one of neutrality. One obvious reason is that Batista, who controlled what the press and radio could say, was careful to muffle the facts. Another reason, however, is that our official representatives allowed themselves to be used in a way that lamentably implied United States support for a government that was detested by its own people.

Until 1957, the ambassador from Washington was Arthur Gardner, whose personal chumminess with the Batista clique was widely known. His successor was Earl E. T. Smith, who had previously distinguished himself as a broker, sportsman, and

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Republican fund raiser in Florida. Mr. Smith was a novice, and only six days after he had presented his credentials to Batista he enraged the government by expressing a perfectly human if undiplomatic feeling of shock at seeing Batista's police hose down a group of women demonstrators in Santiago. But after this incident, Mr. Smith developed more affable relations with the Batista set and made it known that he regarded Castro's rebels as an unsavory bunch of troublemakers. Mr. Smith has been recalled to Washington, but the sour aftertaste remains in Havana.

A MORE PRICKLY controversy concerns the U.S. military mission in Havana. This group of thirty-odd officers resides in Cuba under the terms of the Rio Pact aimed at defending the hemisphere against Communism. To the Cubans, however, it seemed worse than meddlesome for a group of U.S. military officers to be associated with the Cuban Army in the midst of a civil war—especially since the pact specified that in cases of civil strife the mission could be recalled. What particularly galled the Cubans was a much-publicized occasion last March when the mission, in a mood of convivial camaraderie, threw a congratulatory dinner for General Francisco Tabernilla in honor of his promotion to chief of staff. Tabernilla has now left Cuba, and there are indications that the sociable mission too may be asked to depart.

These blunders, combined with the friendly association between the United States business community and the Batista régime, have contributed to the unpopularity of the United States in Cuba. But short of outright intervention, it might fairly be asked, what can we do to disengage from a dictator's embrace?

Obviously, we can be scrupulously proper in our relation with dictators, both in public and private, without exhibiting excessive cordiality. This would rule out most of the gross errors committed in Cuba. It would also eliminate the embarrassment caused by the award of a medal to Venezuela's recent tyrant, Pérez Jiménez.

An attitude of distant coolness to dictators is one side of the coin; the other is the obvious need to give warm and friendly support to the emerging democracies of Latin America. Here again, the United States record is ambiguous. The most grievous case of neglect came in Argentina after the overthrow of Juan Perón. An honorable and moderate-minded provisional government headed by Admiral Pedro Aramburu came to Washington, hat in hand, for help. The aid it got was both skimpy and belated, in large part (it is understood) because U.S. oilmen were unhappy about Argentina's policy of developing its own oil and because private power groups were annoyed about unsettled claims against a nationalized Buenos Aires electric concern.

Will we also risk offering too little too late to other democratic countries in Latin America? Economic distress in the hemisphere is widespread, mainly because the world prices of key commodities have declined sharply, and the one-crop economies of most Latin countries are extremely vulnerable to fluctuating prices. Some slight stirrings in Washington indicate that the seriousness of Latin America's plight and the scope of United States opportunity are at last registering on official consciousness. Dr. Milton Eisenhower has spoken out forcefully about the need for action. The Brazilians have come up with an arresting suggestion for "Operation Pan-America," a regional development plan which if given effective United States support might awaken new hope in the hemisphere.

AND YET THERE WAS an uneasy symbolism in the way Dr. Eisenhower's latest report on Latin America was released to the press. This report, based on Dr. Eisenhower's recent tour through Central America, stressed the need for a cooler policy toward dictators. It was distributed to the press on December 30, but since Press Secretary Jim Hagerty dislikes giving a preference to either morning or afternoon newspapers, it was marked for release on Sunday, January 4—and hence Dr. Eisenhower's critical words about dictators came as a tardy echo of the explosion in Cuba. How much longer will the United States seem to be running after the crowd shouting "Wait for me! I'm your leader!"

Coexisting in Kabul

PETER SCHMID

KABUL

I WAS SITTING in the dining room of a hotel in the north, with two French botanists who had come to Afghanistan as United Nations experts, when the hotelkeeper suddenly strode up to our table with a peremptory gesture. "Out," he said, with an unmistakable motion of his chin toward the door. The Frenchmen had hardly finished their meal; I had not even begun to eat. Why this unexpected interruption? The Frenchmen, who had been here longer and knew the house rules, pointed smiling to a richly laden table not far away from us, piled with mountains of rice and carefully prepared cold meats. "The Russians," they said, shrugging. "The Popoffs don't allow anyone in the dining room when they eat. A completely private party." I slunk up to my room with my stomach growling. After an hour the hotelkeeper knocked at my door. "All I have left is bread and eggs," he said. "The Russians ate up the rice." The gentlemen had had a healthy appetite.

Anyone who likes to meet Russians has plenty of opportunity in Afghanistan. Not all of them are as exclusive as the group I have mentioned. But they are all alike in one respect, even when they seem friendly and approachable at first; they are laconic when asked about their activities and uneasy in the presence of cameras. No one knows how many of them are here. It is considerably harder to estimate their numbers than the number of Ameri-

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can or U.N. experts, because they do not confine themselves to high-level planning but work with the Afghan laborers even as foremen. So they are not only to be found in the hotels run by the government in various cities and market towns; often they live in tents on the work site.

Method in Their Modesty

In fact, a minimum of creature comforts characterizes the Russian presence in Afghanistan. While, for example, the American firm of Morrison & Knudsen, which is carrying out the great Helmand Valley irrigation project, houses its personnel in a camp full of luxurious comforts, with varied menus, one-family houses, gardens, and a swimming pool in the desert, the Russian families must for the most part live three or four to a dwelling, just as they do at home. (The fact that they have left their children behind—perhaps as hostages?—in faraway Moscow is an advantage here.)

Yet the services of these Russian experts do not come cheap. The Soviet Union deducts sizable sums for them from the hundred-million-dollar credit it offered in 1955, when Khrushchev and Bulganin visited the Afghans. The bill for Soviet technicians runs considerably higher than a western firm would ask for the same work. For example, the Salang mountain road which is to shorten road communications between Kabul and the north was planned a few years ago by a German team for $25,000. When the Russians restudied the same project, they presented a bill for $100,000, although they were able to use the preliminary German studies. Through the low salaries it pays its experts and the low standard of living it holds them to, the Soviet Union recoups a good part of its generosity in the granting of credits.

AND WITH all this it manages to impress the Afghans too. The three hundred-odd Americans of the International Cooperation Agency (ICA) live in a way that sets them at a godlike remove from the simple Afghans, who earn only a few dollars a month. The servant draws a simple conclusion from the abundance that surrounds him in an American household and he helps himself to what he wants. In the Afghan family it is taken for granted that the haves help the have-nots, and by the patriarchal rules of their world they consider themselves to a certain extent the adopted children of their masters. In fact, such huge quantities of goods from American larders find their way to the bazaar, where they are sold for exorbitant prices, that the Afghan government has already threatened to revoke the customs privileges granted American commissariats if the situation does not improve. Thus the American abundance produces conflict. With the Russians the situation is reversed: they buy as much as they can on the Afghan market, since many of the items are not available in Russia. The only thing that can be stolen from them is vodka—and this is strictly forbidden to the pious Afghans.

The difference between the Russians and the Americans reveals itself even more strikingly in their work. After the Russians had sounded the tidings of their hundred-million-dollar offer, they did indeed set busily to work. They paved the streets of Kabul, which had previously turned into a swamp in rainy weather. They also extended the roads to the north, in the direction of the Soviet border, and will surface them along their entire length in the next few years. Along these roads they built a number of grain silos and bakeries. "Roads and silos will be very useful to them," a local German told me sardonically, "when they set their troops on the march toward India." Similar thoughts seemed to be in the mind of the Russian visitor who asked the German director of an electric plant built in the north whether the bridges on the dam, over which the highway led, would be able to support heavy tanks. "I would have to know how heavy your armor is," was the German's quick reply. In any case, all the Soviet projects have a curiously egoistic character. An enormous military airport is being built for the Afghans near Kabul, the civil airfields in the north are being extended with the help of Soviet experts, the Russians have secured a monopoly over oil prospecting along the northern frontier and brusquely evicted a Swedish team that had been working there for years—all this could as easily be a quiet preparation for invasion as a form of fraternal aid.

The Russians do everything they can to erase this impression. They act as objectively and disinterestedly as possible, construct their projects quickly without seeking much contact with the Afghans, and then disappear again. This, the Americans say in criticism, is the worst service they can possibly do the Afghans. Factories, power plants, and highways can be of no use to this country until its people are educated to use these products of modern life. The best machine is no better than scrap iron if an inexperienced worker mangles it and there is no mechanic who can patch it together. "That's why we consider it our job to create not so much a new Afghanistan as a new Afghan," Robert M. Snyder, the head of the ICA mission, explained to me.

The Education Program

The Americans have had to learn this wisdom dearly. In the beginning they thought they had only to transplant the machinery of modern progress to make that progress bloom here. There was an enormous desert in the south (which, under an unwritten gentleman's agreement, has been opened to American penetration, while the Russians have taken the north under their wing) and near it a river, the Helmand, whose water oozed away uselessly after the rains. Dams were built and irrigation ditches dug, model seed and cattle brought in, model farms and settlements established. In return for the millions of dollars spent it was hoped that seven hundred thousand landless nomads could be settled in a desert that had been turned into a Garden of Eden. One splendid wheat harvest came up out of the irrigated soil, and then the jig was up. The soil was salty and barren. The nomads drifted off again. The result was a fiasco. The Americans blamed the Afghans for giving the project too little thought and for rushing into cultivation too soon. And with this came the realization that it was necessary to train and educate the Afghans before building dams and factories.

An all-out educational program

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was promptly set rolling. Agricultural instructors were imported from the University of Wyoming and took up their experiments on Afghan soil. German and French had been the foreign languages previously dominant among the educated classes, but now twenty English teachers were imported from the United States to try to alter the balance. An American professor has joined the rector of the University of Kabul as an adviser, and the university is being expanded with dollar aid. Technical schools staffed with Americans have opened their doors.

While the Russians have built airfields, the Americans have organized an airline called Aryana (in allusion to the fact that Afghanistan was the original home of the Aryans) and staffed its top posts with managers from Pan American. A Pakistani blockade a few years ago made landlocked Afghanistan dependent on the Soviet Union for transit. Aryana is intended to free it from this dependence. (That is also the purpose of America's intercession with its Pakistani allies to grant the Afghans a free port in Karachi.)

FOR A TIME the Americans tried to create a friendly Afghan elite, lavishly distributing fellowships to American universities. But it became evident that when they returned from the United States the recipients of these fellowships found it difficult to adjust to the archaic conditions of their country. Moreover, Afghan authorities mistrustfully assigned them to meaningless little jobs on which they could barely keep body and soul together. The extent of the innate spiritual resistance to progress in this country can hardly be imagined in the West. Every expression of modern thinking sounds here only as discord in the monotonous, primitive Islamic melody, and the voice of the enlightened intellectuals is drowned in the howling of fanatical mullahs. In such circumstances the educational task the Americans have assumed has brought many who enthusiastically embarked on it to despair. "Compared with the Russians, our worst disadvantage is that our work cannot be seen concretely, like a street, a silo, or a gasoline tank," many Americans complained to me. Most Europeans in the country ridicule the American effort to transform the Afghans as a quixotic enterprise.

On the other hand, this resistance to progress can also spoil the Soviet game. Much as the government may flirt with the Russians, they are

heartily disliked by the people. However much Soviet experts from Moslem areas may display their piety in the mosques at Friday prayers, the Afghans—and particularly the Turkmen and Uzbek minorities in the north—are well informed about the godlessness of the régime through their relations over the border and through the refugees that cross over.

Rubles *über Alles?*

The German ambassador witnessed a demonstration of the population's sympathies when his car broke down at a ford and the usually helpful Afghans did not lift a finger to assist him. "Let the Russian pull himself out," they said. But their indifference vanished when the ambassador explained who he was. For since the time of Kaiser Wilhelm, and especially—it must be said—of Hitler, Germans have been the best-liked of all Europeans here.

This Afghan friendship for Germany has a long history: imperial Germany had already played with the idea of unhinging the British world imperium from the pivot of Afghanistan. From those first contacts a collaboration grew up that reached a high degree of intensity during the Nazi era, and in 1941 the Afghans, instead of handing over German nationals as the Allies had demanded, sent them home under safe-conduct. A German *Oberrealschule* and a technical school, active again today, educated generations of upper-class Afghans. After the Second World War Siemens built the great power station at Sarobi; and in Gulbahar, fifty miles north of Kabul, Germans are building a huge textile mill in the desert, which when completed will turn out forty million square yards of cotton cloth a year. Afghanistan is to receive several million marks of the money West Germany is planning to give the underdeveloped countries. Only one shadow hovers over German-Afghan friendship: various projects that had been assigned to German firms have recently been captured by the Russians (for example, the further expansion of Sarobi). Which will prove stronger, sentiment or rubles? It depends entirely on developments inside Afghanistan.

The people may hate Russia and Communism, but this apathetic mass neither could nor would prevent a pro-Communist coup. The strict military dictatorship of Prince Daud does not allow even the faintest hint of political discussion; critics simply disappear into prison, without trial, for years. On top of that, since 1953 all business has increasingly been forced under a state control which is distinguished neither for ability nor honesty.

As in all such dictatorships, no one knows how far the rot has eaten behind the façade. In any event, there are a great many dissatisfied people in Afghanistan—the intellectuals educated in foreign universities who can find no worthwhile jobs, the young women imprisoned behind their veils. And the fifty jet pilots the Russians have invited to Moscow for training will undoubtedly hear lectures on more than navigation.

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Credit Cards:

The Thirty-Day Tycoons

ROBERT BENDINER

STEP BY STEP, man has worked his way up from barter, through shells, carved bone, and chunks of iron, through gold, paper money, and checks, to that most lordly of all methods of purchase, the credit card. Any American who has paid his telephone bill regularly, or who makes at least $7,500 a year and is not known to be a dead beat, can now live comfortably for weeks on end simply by drawing a few cards out of his wallet, and without handling any more cash than it takes him to ride taxis, buy his newspapers, and occasionally buy back his wraps from a hat-check girl. He may have small hope of ever seeing Tokyo or Rome or even Duluth, but he has the comfort of knowing that should fate unpredictably drop him in any of those cities, he can eat in their restaurants and drink in their night clubs with thirty days to pay.

In New York a cashless American can as easily spend the night in a suite at the Waldorf-Astoria as in a settlement flophouse. With a Diners' Club card he can park his car on any Kinney lot in the United States, pick up a quart of Scotch at the Jug and Jigger in Los Angeles, hire a temporary sales assistant from the Wichita office of Manpower, Inc., or arrange a jungle expedition at Springbok Safaris in Capetown. With an American Express card he can get his car repaired at almost any General Motors, Chrysler, or Ford dealer's, or have Raymond & Whitcomb book him for a grand tour of the Lesser Antilles. He can ride planes, trains, and even busses on credit and charge a suit of clothes or a dozen long-stem roses. If he has been forehanded enough to possess a United Whelan Corporation card, he can even walk into any of its 136 drugstores and get a swig of Pepto-Bismol on the cuff.

All that is required of him for the privilege of leading this sort of life is that he pay, promptly, the credit-card company's single monthly bill, however shocking. But if he fails in this, he is soon undone. He may be drummed out of the Diners' Club, for example, stripped of his card and his middle-class respectability, and doomed to a lifetime of paying cash for his Barricini candy.

According to an estimate in *Barron's*, there are some fifteen million credit credentials now in circulation, but ninety per cent of them are special-purpose cards issued by individual hotels, airlines, railroads, oil companies, telephone and telegraph companies, and the like. These are free, and a vast number of them are evidently filed away in wastebaskets or carried around without ever being used. The two big general-purpose cards, which are thriving businesses in their own right and are a fresh social phenomenon, are reserved for the paying members of the Diners' Club—now over 900,000 in number and increasing at the rate of 30,000 a month—and subscribers to the American Express credit-card service. Only four months old, American Express already claims 500,000 members and is growing fast. A brand-new entrant in the field and still to go into operation is Carte Blanche, which the Hilton Hotel people are now offering to those who are "interested in the *best* of everything, not the *most*," but which at the same time is being billed as "the single credit card that is truly universal in scope, complete in coverage." Nearly a million Hilton Hotel credit-card holders will get it automatically.

This ambivalent appeal to snobbery and the widest possible convenience for all runs through the brief history of the credit card. It explains the remarkable speed with which, on the entrepreneurial side, the business has in eight years run the cycle from competitive free-for-all to consolidation to oligopoly; and on the patrons' side from access to a few select establishments to what the trade so readily describes as "universal use."

On the Town on the Cuff

When Diners' was launched, in 1950, the field was all but virginal. Aside from the special-purpose cards, designed solely to encourage "product loyalty," and department-store charge accounts, people wrote checks where their checks were acceptable or paid for goods and services in old-fashioned green paper. Finding himself by chance without cash or checkbook in a restaurant one evening in 1950, the legend has it, a credit man named Frank McNamara conceived the idea of relieving a favored group of New York businessmen of such embarrassment in the future by means of a restaurant credit card. At first it went to a small circle of two hundred friends of the founder and his attorney, Ralph E. Schneider, who today presides over the board of the multi-million-dollar Diners' Club.

The idea caught on so rapidly that its potential was too obvious to miss. Within a short time professional promoters were at work on a folder, done up in baronial style, which began: "The Membership Selection Committee of the Diners' Club invites you . . ." During the next five years these stern social arbiters sent the invitation to a select group of prospects running into the millions, and the aristocrats poured in—20,000 the first year, 65,000 by 1953, 250,000 by 1956.

Competitors quickly staked claims in the new gold field, more than a dozen of them. Too limited in scope to be a real convenience, these outfits either died out as fast as they sprang up or, like Dine & Sign and Trip-Charge, sold out to Diners', which shrewdly and steadily opened up new areas for charging, or, perhaps more

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accurately, consolidated those already existing. In the spiraling of consumer credit that followed the war, businessmen had found themselves with such a plethora of cards, most of them free, that according to a Diners' spokesman one needed "a custom-tailored suit with a special pocket to accommodate the wallet, and a special staff of auditors to take care of his individual monthly statements and to keep track of the records for tax and other purposes." What Diners' said, in effect, was "Pay us $5 a year and we'll give you one card for whatever you need, a directory of reliable services, and one itemized bill a month." To its ever-growing list of restaurants it gradually added car rentals, a few hotels, some motel chains, gas stations, florists, liquor stores, and gift shops.

ON THE FACE of it, the scheme offered advantages all around. The card user not only could enjoy the convenience of dining or buying, spontaneously and without a thought for the amount of cash in his pocket, but also could savor the heady wine of owning what the ubiquitous Dr. Ernest Dichter called "a symbol of inexhaustible potency." The world was his private club, every waiter was its grizzled retainer, and a display of cash was vulgar. On the more practical side, membership gave him a pocket guide to accommodations anywhere in the country—later, anywhere in the world—and served as a ready identification for getting checks cashed and similar services. Finally, the monthly statement provided him with an automatic record of expenditures that could be used in making up expense accounts and income-tax deductions. Diners' biggest three-month period followed the Internal Revenue Bureau's ruling early last year that required a detailed accounting of business expenses.

For employers—and close to half the memberships are bought by companies for their executives and salesmen—there were other advantages. The arrangement not only would coordinate their expense-account bookkeeping but also would reduce the scope of that mildly larcenous practice known as padding. Since employees' bills went directly to the company, a salesman could no longer chalk up imaginary $20 dinner checks as "business entertainment." Neither could he charge the firm $15 a night for the sort of accommodations its prestige demanded while he actually holed up in a dive for $6, pocketing the difference.

To the restaurants and shops involved in the scheme, the appeal was similarly plausible. A listing in the Diners' directory and the competitive advantage of offering credit (at no risk to themselves) would logically bring in new business, for which the Diners' Club charge of seven per cent would be a modest commission.

As for the Club itself, the seven per cent would be almost entirely swallowed up by the costs of bookkeeping, billing, promoting, advertising, and credit investigating, plus some inevitable losses from dead beats. But the annual fee from the cardholder would be pure profit. It was this basic fact that was to dictate the course of the business, to make bigness mandatory and exclusiveness a mirage. Success lay in getting as many members as possible, and clearly there was a limit to the number who could dine at New York's Café Chambord or even at the Latin Quarter. Accordingly, the directory got longer and longer and the emphasis shifted gradually to the sale of convenience rather than delusions of grandeur.

Eating Up the Competition

So matters stood at the beginning of 1958, a historic year in the business. At the end of March, Diners' only rivals were the Esquire Club, which had long since swallowed up the Duncan Hines card and now had about 100,000 members, and the Gourmet Club, limping along with some 40,000 cardholders. Diners' had 580,000 members, who had run up charges of more than $90 million in its latest fiscal year (the average member spends $20 a month) and netted the Club an income of $2,838,000 before taxes. But of its roughly 13,000 facilities, a vast majority were still restaurants.

In June, news of the first formidable competition broke, and things have moved briskly ever since. The American Express Company, for 108 years a byword in travelers' services, announced its intention of launching an "All in One Comprehensive, World-Wide Card—The Card That Gives You the Most of All!" Eyebrows were raised in financial circles at the sight of American Express offering competition to its own Travelers' Cheques. Archaic spelling and all, these are still making the company a fortune in fees, which people pay to let it use their cash while they're traveling. But if Diners' and other credit companies were to cut into that business anyway, it probably seemed sensible to American Express to swim with the tide and furnish its own credit service—at $6 a year, a dollar more than Diners'. A spokesman expressed the private view that its credit cards would probably go to businessmen for the most part, while vacationers would stay with the Travelers' Cheques.

With a century of varied experience, an enormous reputation, and an established network, Amexco, as it is called in the trade, was off to a fast start. Following the classic pattern, the two leaders got down to the business of buying up the rest of the field. First Amexco took over Gourmet, and Diners' countered by absorbing Esquire, which had just emerged from the red and was thinking of itself as a "good number two" when the new giant came into the picture. American Express then went into a huddle with the Sheraton Credit Corporation, with its forty-nine hotels across the country and a list of 860,000 free cardholders. The proposed deal fell through, however, and Sheraton soon after went over to Diners', which expects the arrangement eventually to net it 200,000 new paid members, besides enabling it to offer its cardholders the extensive Sheraton facilities. Meanwhile, however, American Express had acquired Universal Trav-

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elcard, held by 160,000 persons and sponsored by the American Hotel Association. That organization's 4,500 member hotels, throughout the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and the West Indies, were left free to bill card users individually or through Amex. Soon after, the Hotel Corporation of America, third largest chain in the country, agreed to honor the American Express card, and it was expected that many of its 250,000 guest-card holders would take out Amex cards of their own. The hotel field, which had hitherto kept clear of independent credit-card companies, was now wide open.

Who Pays the Seven Per Cent?

One of the biggest prospective deals slipped through Diners' fingers when Conrad Hilton's agents broke off negotiations for merging the Hilton credit card with the Diners' system. "We decided against this," Mr. Hilton explained later, "because we felt that by operating our own credit organization we can assure ourselves, our shareholders, and cardholders that such operation will meet the Hilton standards." A more prosaic explanation was that Hilton wanted the majority stock of the merged company, which would then be known as Hilton's Diners' Club.

Close to a million holders of its own free credit cards provide Hilton with a valuable list from which to construct a paid membership for Carte Blanche, and thirty-five hostelries, from the Istanbul Hilton to the Shamrock Hilton, offer services that neither Diners' nor American Express can belittle. Yet there is a strong feeling in the trade that a third entry will find the pickings rather lean, especially one that is making exclusively a snob appeal. Carte Blanche will be limited to those "accustomed to the finest service and attention," reads the promotion—"a credit credential which is finer—more selective—than anything now available." Since many of the world's best restaurants and services already do business with Diners' and American Express, Hilton will only be adding another and more limited card to the nation's wallets if Carte Blanche persists in sounding this note of seigniorial distinction.

The trend, in fact, is all in the other direction. "We're out to get all the service establishments we can and all the activities we can," says Ralph T. Reed, president of American Express, according to the *Wall Street Journal*. "We hope to enable people to use a credit card for most anything they can spend money on." Among the more notable activities he has lined up are the rental of Dictaphone recorders, which can be picked up on credit at any of Dictaphone's 259 offices around the world; the temporary services of office help from Kelly Girl Service, Inc.; and transportation on Greyhound busses, not hitherto regarded as luxury travel.

Similarly, Ralph E. Schneider, chairman of the board of Diners', sees credit cards justified only if they are comprehensive enough to supplant "a patchwork of credit services," and he is doing his best to make them so. On one of his cards you can now buy a Beneficial Standard Life Insurance Co. travel policy, attend a closed-circuit television showing of a prize fight, and pick up a ticket for the ballet. One Diners' cardholder makes a daily pilgrimage to H. Hicks & Son in midtown Manhattan, where he runs up a monthly bill in ice-cream sodas. A story current at Diners' headquarters concerns the American newspaperman who was attracted to a dancer in a Madrid night club. Advised by the headwaiter that he could take her away from the job for the rest of the evening if he paid for her time, the correspondent proceeded to write out a small check. This the headwaiter was obliged to refuse, but on learning that the patron had a Diners' card, he gravely agreed to charge the lady as dessert.

IRONICALLY, the very approach to "universality of use," which will swell the next Diners' and Express directories to more than 22,000 establishments each, may turn out to be almost as risky as it seems to be necessary. Obviously, if every restaurant in town above the status of a coffeepot is included in the system, business will be apportioned in the usual way, as though there were no listings at all. Proprietors may then be expected to take a decreasingly mellow view about the discount they pay on credit-card customers, not to mention the several weeks they have to wait for their money.

The problem is perhaps one for the future, but ominous rumblings are already to be heard. Pointing out that "Few restaurants anywhere make a seven per cent profit," a top official of the Washington State Restaurant Association complains that "Originally the national credit cards were issued as a convenience for traveling people, but more recently areas have been saturated with cards to local residents." To the owner of New York's Café Chambord the cards are "a necessary evil." In some restaurants when you produce a Diners' or Express card, the manager will sidle up with an offer to enroll you in the restaurant's private credit club, membership to be effective at once and no questions asked. You get the credit, the restaurant keeps its listing—and also its seven per cent. Some hotels have even been known to go a step further and offer you a two or three per cent reduction for obliging them in this way. It's all a violation of contract, of course, but investigation is difficult for the credit-card companies and not worth while except for huge outlets like a Manhattan night club, featuring big-name entertainers, that does some $60,000 a month in Diners' Club business. It is assumed, moreover, that few restaurants will want to take on the collection headaches involved in this sort of bootleg credit.

Signs of Rebellion

More serious, certainly to the consumer, is the growing conviction of some establishments that if the customer wants credit, *he* should pay for it—and the determination to see that in one way or another he does. Seattle restaurants threatened a five per cent service charge on credit-card checks, which would be a violation of their contract. Buying snow tires in a cut-rate store at a large Midwestern city recently, I was told that if I wanted to use a credit card I would have to pay list price—eight per cent more than the cash customers. *Food Service*, a leading organ of the restaurant trade, gets

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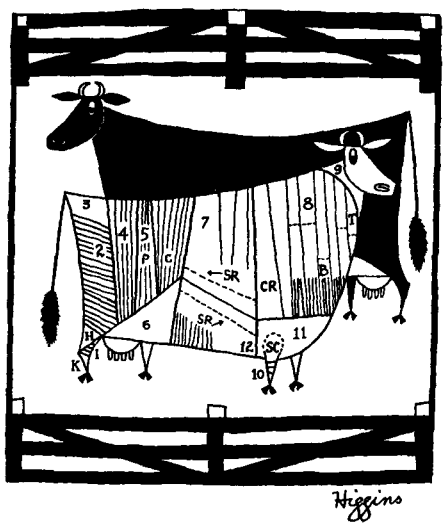
down to some really blunt talk: "Why isn't it practical for the consumer to pay for this credit service directly? If he doesn't pay for it directly, he will most assuredly pay for it in poorer food quality, less efficient service, or in other ways. Instead of making the restaurant responsible for this surcharge or service fee, why cannot the Diners' Club and the American Express Co. simply add that charge to the monthly bill of the consumer?" Seven per cent for thirty days' credit might well strike some consumers as high if not usurious.

Neither Diners' nor American Express professes to be in the least concerned about this hint of rebellion, pointing out that restaurants are still clamoring to get in. Recent acquisitions include Lüchow's, the Stork Club, and Toots Shor's. "The restaurants may kick," one authority explained to me, "but if credit cards just serve to fill that last table, it's worth it to them." In general, the cards are necessary to draw the expense-account crowd, without which the high-priced establishment has little chance to survive.

TRAVEL AGENTS are even more resentful than the restaurateurs. With four hundred offices of its own, American Express inevitably makes a feature of travel credit—including air, rail, and steamship tickets, tours, and accommodations of all sorts. Independent agents can meet this competition by honoring Amex cards, but they pay a two per cent fee to American Express on all such bookings. Diners' charges the agents two per cent on domestic trips, four per cent on foreign, plus a $500 annual fee. Actually the independent agents find Amex harder to swallow, in spite of its more generous terms, because it is so direct a competitor.

A recent convention of the American Society of Travel Agents unanimously adopted a resolution recommending that none of its members take part in any credit-card systems "which require that the travel agent bear the cost of such credit." The narrow margins on which the agents work made the resolution at least understandable: five per cent from air lines and railroads on domestic point-to-point bookings; seven per cent on foreign air travel, except for packaged tours, which pay ten per cent; and ten per cent on steamship tickets. On most of this business, the agents contend, an additional two per cent charge would force the margin below what they require to stay in business. Again,



by way of argument, the credit-card companies offer dreams of greatly expanded business, stimulated by their promotion, and the attractions of credit buying—though why anyone planning to go to India in June should be interested in thirty-day credit in January is something of a mystery, especially since the air lines themselves not only allow but urge their clients to fly now and pay later.

It should be noted, however, that American Express does forgo its usual discount on hotel accommodations booked through agents, and that by a little skillful salesmanship agents can and do convert point-to-point trips into "tours," which get them a higher commission from the carriers. The manager of one of the larger agencies explained the technique. "We manage to pass the Diners' Club charge on to the customer," he said, rather disarmingly, "though he doesn't know it."

A hypothetical case is that of a couple who ask only for a pair of air-line tickets to Paris. First a polite question or two as to what they are planning to do and where they are staying—they usually have made no arrangements at this point—yields a hotel booking (ten per cent to the agent). Next a suggestion that they might want to "run down to the château country," or even to the Riviera, builds the trip into an "F.I.T.," or foreign independent tour, which has the advantage of raising the air line's transatlantic discount to ten per cent, as "made" business. Further accommodations have to be booked accordingly, and the agent then says something like, "Of course you won't want to travel around in a bus with everyone gawking at you." So, for another $100, a car rental is ordered, on which the agent likewise collects ten per cent. After all, concluded my informant, the couple might never have come in without the Diners' listing in the first place, and a little extra work took care of the Club's commission. "Then, too," he added as a happy afterthought, "sometimes without the least work from the agent, a customer will decide to pay in cash instead of using his card. Since he has to pay before leaving anyway, he might as well pay the travel agent as the Diners' Club."

A House of Cards?

To the extent that credit cards have any weight in the national economy, the system might be regarded as inflationary. Not only is the cost often passed on to the consumer in one way or another, but the card user is lured into spending a good deal more than he would have laid out in hard cash—thirty-five per cent more, according to credit surveys. This is, in fact, one of the potent arguments used to keep the rebellious restaurants in line.

But it can hardly be argued that the credit cards so far are a serious factor in the economy. Diners' total volume of charges, approximately $140 million this year, is lost in the $43 billion of consumer credit outstanding in the nation as a whole. The point would hardly be worth mentioning were it not for two additional factors—the penetration of retail trade by the credit cards and the number of potential subscribers.

Florists, fancy gift shops, candy stores, tobacconists, and gourmet shops have been available to the credit-card holder from the beginning, but in the past few months both Diners' and American Express have been making more ambitious

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inroads into retail business. Diners', for example, has lined up Alfred Dunhill, Mark Cross, Doubleday Book Shops, Hoffritz Cutlery, the Record Hunter, and the Strauss Stores. Matthew Simmons, sales vice-president, expects this sort of thing to be "a big field for expansion," adding ebulliently, "I don't see any limits. I think some day you're going to be able to charge anything." Besides duplicating Hoffritz and Doubleday, American Express has countered with Weber & Heilbroner, Brentano's, and the Carole Stupell Salon, and for good measure thrown in Lew Magram, Shirtmaker to the Stars. The Chase Manhattan Bank in New York is probably paving the way to still greener fields with a credit card of its own, which in its second month of operation is good at some three thousand retail establishments. It is not strictly comparable with the other credit cards, however, since it is local, imposes a maximum on monthly purchases, and permits installment paying over a five-month period.

Unless Diners', American Express, and Hilton change their basic plan—and there is no indication that they will—their entry into the retail field should have some interesting effects. There are limits to a card user's travel opportunities, and he can spend only so much on food, even if he substitutes steak for filet of sole, but he can easily go overboard on general merchandise. If the cost of his credit in retail stores is gradually added to the price, as it has been elsewhere, the additional five to seven per cent on a great volume of business could in time make a measurable difference in the price structure.

The card business itself is apt to be affected by the move into the retail field, where credit risk would seem to be a considerable factor. A dead beat doing business at his local department store is not likely to get far. Assuming that he has been allowed to open a charge account to begin with, he can pretty quickly be pinned down and made to pay. But a man with a Diners' card might tour twenty states and buy enough to furnish a mansion, all at the credit club's expense, before his magic card could be retrieved or canceled. According to both Diners' and American Express spokesmen, the loss from dead beats is less than one per cent, which is accepted as the tolerable ceiling. But Esquire, in its first year, was losing four per cent to bad risks, and even where eventual collections are made, the cost of recovery can be high. I was told of one cardholder who ran up an $8,000 tab in Las Vegas and didn't pay until the club got a court order permitting it to seize his Cadillac.

'When Everyone Is Somebodee...'

To spread the risk, which will presumably be greater as the system grows, the card companies, like the insurance companies, will have all the more need for the largest possible number of customers, though they will need that in any case, since it is in membership fees that the profit lies. Ralph Schneider of the Diners'

Club fixes the potential membership at three to five million in the United States alone, and both Diners' and Hilton are reaching out for foreign cardholders as well. With agencies operating in its name, under franchise agreements, in Japan, Australia, Venezuela, Mexico, and throughout Europe, Diners' has already inducted some 85,000 nationals of other countries into the joys of credit.

While foreign membership may yield a tidy additional profit in annual fees, however, the built-in limits to the system are far narrower abroad than at home. It is true that over the centuries hard-pressed European bluebloods have made a fine art of living on trust, but their technique is highly individual, whereas installment buying, layaway plans, and thirty-day credit are America's gift to the entire middle class.

In western Europe, where that class is substantial, there is at least some opportunity for organized living on the cuff, but selling credit cards to the bourgeoisie of Greece or Thailand or Paraguay is clearly an enterprise hardly more promising than peddling microphones in a Trappist monastery. And even where the economy might offer some possibility for the credit-card business, tradition in the stratified societies of Europe would be against an easy and popular consumer credit that ruined nice distinctions, the prevailing theory being that of the Grand Inquisitor in *The Gondoliers*—"When everyone is somebodee, Then no one's anybody!" When a Hilton spokesman told me how pleased the chain was to extend its card to other nationals—the dead-beat rate is about the same abroad as in the United States—he meant, of course, those who might in any case frequent the Castellana Hilton or the Nile Hilton, a category that does not include what passes for Madrileños of the middle class or fellahin recently elevated by Mr. Nasser. A credit card in Europe or Asia, therefore, is bound to retain something of that social cachet it had here in the brief period before its creators were driven to seek profits from a mass elite, a quest entirely in keeping with the genius of the country.

In the United States, indeed, the card idea, far from springing full blown from the forehead of a promoter, was a natural step in the history of an economy long geared to mass production, mass appeal, and mass buying—on whatever terms it could be had. As one observer put it, "This is a spend-all, credit-for-much economy and the credit card is exactly right for it."

Whether it is the American economy that erases social distinctions or a native egalitarianism that dictates the economy, foreign visitors are immediately, and often unfavorably, struck by the fact that a stenographer dresses like the boss's wife and that a $10,000-a-year sales manager of a dog-food concern, at play on an expense account, is easily mistaken for an oil billionaire on a bender. In a country where "Every Man a King" was an effective political slogan, there is every reason for the credit-card companies to go on building a mass patriciate. You too can be exclusive. So can we all.

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Mr. Justice Stewart Serves 'On Approval'

JOHN R. THOMPSON

WHEN Jim Hagerty one morning last October dramatically introduced "the man standing next to me" as the new justice of the Supreme Court, White House correspondents were quick to note that Potter Stewart of Ohio, at forty-three, was the youngest man, except for William O. Douglas, to reach the court in more than a century. Unreported was another newsworthy fact: Stewart is only the fourth justice to hold on a temporary basis what is ordinarily a lifetime job. Since his is a "recess appointment," made while Congress was not in session and therefore without benefit of Senate confirmation, it is good "until the end of the next session of the Senate and no longer." So reads his commission from the President.

Before Stewart could enjoy the security of permanent tenure, there would have to be a formal nomination by the President after the Senate met in January, hearings and a favorable report by Senator James O. Eastland's Judiciary Committee, and a vote of approval by the full Senate—probably in March. Meanwhile, Stewart would sit on the court and do the same work as the other eight justices. So long as confirmation stood as a hurdle, though, his would be a sort of trial justiceship. He would be on his own official good behavior while awaiting Senate clearance of tenure "during good behavior," the Constitutional way of saying for life.

IT IS THIS probationary status that has made a number of observers wonder in private whether it was wise policy for the administration, when informed last summer of Justice Harold Burton's impending retirement, not to have waited until Congress met before filling the vacancy. Had it done so, Stewart would have been sworn in only after confirmation for life. The critics do not question the legality of the Stewart appointment – recess appointments are clearly permitted by the Constitution—but they say it is not in keeping with the underlying Constitutional objective of a Supreme Court independent in fact and appearance of any fear of reprisals from a President or Congress irked by court decisions. This, the argument runs, was the whole point of giving justices a lifetime job, thus protecting them against being fired, and of barring Congress from ever cutting their pay.

Queried, an administration spokesman who asked not to be identified replied that it is also important for the court to be kept at its full nine-man strength. And what is more important, in order to place the best available man—Stewart—on the court it was necessary to appoint him promptly, before "pressures built up for other candidates with much greater political support."

PAST PRACTICE, while never an infallible guide, at least entitles the critics to a show-me-why attitude. Before Eisenhower, only President Washington had tried an interim appointment to the high bench. In 1795, between sessions of Congress, he named John Rutledge of South Carolina Chief Justice. Rutledge presided over a short term of the court and was then rejected by the Senate —not, apparently, because of disapproval of Washington's procedure but because of an anti-administration foreign-policy speech Rutledge had made just before appointment and rumors that he was cracking up mentally. For the next 158 years no President made or, so far as is known, seriously considered a recess appointment to the court. Then in 1953, when Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson's death after adjournment of Congress offered Eisenhower his first court vacancy, he promptly gave Earl Warren a temporary commission. Three years later he followed the same course in appointing William J. Brennan, Jr., to replace the retiring Sherman Minton. In each case an interim commission in October was followed by formal nomination in January, Judiciary Committee approval in February, and Senate confirmation in March. Now Stewart is on the same escalator.

When the job was offered to him, Stewart's choice was really no choice at all. Barring a most unlikely fluke of history, this was his now-or-never chance. Naturally he grabbed the brass ring. Immediately, however, he had to resign his comfortable and satisfying $25,500 a year lifetime judgeship on the Federal Sixth Court of Appeals in his home city of Cincinnati. No doubt this is a price he or almost any other lawyer would gladly have paid even if confirmation had seemed doubtful. Nonetheless, it did increase his personal stake in not rubbing senators the wrong way during his five months "on approval." And it was a step he would not have had to take until confirmation was an accomplished fact if the President had waited until Congress was in session.

In October, Stewart's confirmation looked like a pretty sure thing. A year and a half earlier, when Charles Whittaker was nominated to the court, reports had been circulated, maybe as a trial balloon, that the President and Attorney General William Rogers were then holding Stewart in the runner-up spot. Neither then nor later had there been any indication that Stewart's appointment would meet strong opposition. The niceties of political etiquette had been observed by clearing his name with the two senators from Ohio, Bricker and Lausche; with Bricker's re-election considered a foregone conclusion, there was no risk that a home-state senator would kick over the traces to declare Stewart "personally obnoxious" and thus block confirmation by the archaic tradition of "senatorial courtesy." The Democrats did hold a narrow margin in the Senate and might increase it somewhat in the forthcoming elections, but most of them, including Senator Eastland, seemed to feel that Republican Stewart was as acceptable as anyone else the President might name.

Nevertheless, Stewart also knew

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from history that confirmation of a Supreme Court nominee, like many other things in politics, could not safely be counted before the event. On twenty-two occasions—or more than one out of six—the Senate has turned down Supreme Court nominations. True, only one of these actions occurred in this century, but it is still a sharp warning against complacent confidence.

Then, to add to whatever trepidation Stewart may have had in October, came the November elections. A 49-47 Democratic edge in the Senate widened to 64-34, an 8-7 division of the Judiciary Committee to 10-5. As a further omen, Democrat Stephen Young even upset Stewart's sponsor John Bricker.

Certain as confirmation still appeared, the situation was not one to put Stewart completely at ease. That it did not—and that he also wished to forestall charges of overconfidence—may be seen in Stewart's decision to leave his wife and children in Cincinnati while he stayed at a Washington hotel for the interim.

To Trim or Not to Trim

Stewart's uncertainty is of public concern only if it affects, or is suspected of affecting, his work on the court. Consciously or unconsciously, it seems to me, it is bound to affect him. For during these probationary months Stewart must feel the Senate looking over his shoulder and appraising his every act, be it a publicized question from the bench, his vote on controversial cases, or any opinion he writes. No man in his position could be immune from some temptation to avoid rocking the boat, to play it safe, and to adjust action to anticipated Senate reaction. Nor could a man of integrity and perception, and Stewart is that, be unaware of a countervailing inclination to lean over backwards to avoid that temptation and confound critics eager to discern real or fancied trimming of sails.

For Justice Stewart this is no mere hypothetical dilemma. Already this 1958-1959 term of court has faced issues almost tailor-made to bring any such inner conflict into play, and more are pending. Almost at the outset he had to go on record in a school segregation case, although that turned out to be a false alarm when his colleagues unanimously joined him in voting that Alabama's pupil placement law could conceivably be administered without anti-Negro bias. A week or so later he had to vote, and anticipate a mid-winter announcement of decision, on several cases in which individuals convicted of contempt were challenging the authority of the House Committee on Un-American Activities and of state agencies investigating subversive activities in New Hampshire and racial activities in Virginia. Recent Supreme Court decisions in that field had raised a storm of congressional criticism and last year nearly led to new laws curtailing the court's power. Still another group of cases, tentatively scheduled for argument late in February, concerns a defendant's right to check courtroom testimony against the original stories the witnesses gave the FBI.

To participate in such cases without antagonizing powerful senators would defy the most nimble of judicial tightrope artists.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL provision permitting—but by no means directing—recess appointments covers all offices filled normally by Presidential appointment with the advice and consent of the Senate. Quite clearly it was drafted to handle situations in which the government could not function effectively between sessions of Congress unless vacancies were filled. Conceivably such situations could arise in the Supreme Court; illnesses or multiple vacancies, for example, might make it impossible to assemble a working quorum of six justices. When Stewart was appointed, however, the court already had eight functioning members.

It *is* desirable, as the administration spokesman maintains, that the Supreme Court have the nine-man strength Congress finally settled on ninety years ago. In particular, the full number reduces the mathematical chances of an important case being decided by less than a five-man majority and therefore carrying a larger than usual question mark about the durability of the decision. But this is not to say that the court cannot, or even is not likely to, do its job when temporarily shorthanded. Indeed, there have been many periods in which it has functioned without ill effect while one member was unable to participate because of illness or other reasons. Its work load has been of manageable proportions for more than thirty years, and the addition of a ninth justice, new to the job, can speed disposition of the year's cases only imperceptibly.

Granted, without Justice Stewart the court might in one or two cases have divided 4-4 during the fall and winter. Ties, however, can and do occur occasionally even with nine justices, when one of the nine is ill or feels disqualified by some personal connection from voting in a particular case. If any such tie had occurred, the court could simply have "affirmed by an equally divided court" the lower-court decision under review or, if it thought best, have deferred argument and decision until after the vacancy had been filled.

The other reason advanced to justify recess appointment of Stewart (and presumably of Warren and Brennan)—that delay by the President would have been utilized by other candidates to rally political opposition and thus make confirmation a chancy thing—sounds persuasive. If realistic, it could be of overriding importance. In all three recent appointments, it could have made the difference between getting and losing the services of a top-notch man for as much as a quarter century. Whether delay would have involved such risks must remain a guess; personally, I doubt it. In any event, the President could have made his choice the front runner by announcing Stewart's nomination, instead of appointment, in October. That is what Theodore Roosevelt did in 1902 when he determined to install Oliver Wendell Holmes in a vacancy that occurred well in advance of a Senate session.

OF THE FIVE Supreme Court vacancies Eisenhower has had an opportunity to fill, three have occurred between Senate sessions, and he has made interim appointments for all three. If further precedents are allowed to accumulate without open discussion of the procedure, we may find that recess appointments have become not exceptions reserved for exceptional circumstances but the habitual Executive response to routine situations.

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Talking Sometimes Helps

A short story

ROBERT BINGHAM

THE MORNING after Natalie Sanderson's miscarriage the doctor told her that he was sorry there weren't any beds available on the other floors of the hospital and so she would have to stay in maternity, but that it didn't matter much anyway because there were no complications and essentially she could leave just about whenever she felt like it. She was trying to make up her mind whether to take some sleeping pills and stay doped up in the hospital for twenty-four hours when the babies were brought to their mothers for the ten-o'clock feeding.

After the noisy parade had gone on for about half an hour out in the corridor, a gray-haired Negro woman wheeled a bassinet into the room and pushed her rimless glasses down her broad nose to check the name on the chart at the foot of Natalie's bed, which was the one near the door. "Oh, that's right," she said, with a grave professional smile, "you don't get one, do you, Mrs. Sanderson?" The middle-aged nurse picked up the baby, still quite red even though it had thick black hair curling down over its ears, and carried it over to the woman in the second bed. "And the thing about you, Mrs. Salvucci, is that you're trying to breast-feed, right? I wonder how long you'll stick at that." She winked back over her shoulder at Natalie.

Mrs. Salvucci had been lying with her face turned away toward the window and snoring lightly, but suddenly she was sitting up wide awake and reaching out impatiently for the baby. "Give him to me and get the hell out of here!" she shouted. "I nursed three others who never even had a bottle in their mouths, and I don't need any of your goddam advice." She threw her long black hair over her shoulder and opened her embroidered pink bed jacket. That somehow made the baby cry more than ever and the hairy purple head began to buck furiously at Mrs. Salvucci's dripping breast.

The Negro woman set her lips together and banged Natalie's ash tray several times against the side of a metal wastebasket. "Some particular classes of people just don't seem to have caught up with the modern age, don't you find, dear?" There

was just a trace of a Southern accent in her voice. She yanked Natalie's pillows out from under her head and slapped them.

The baby was eating well now. "Go to hell, Johnson," said Mrs. Salvucci amiably as the nurse left the room. "Honest, these nurses give me a pain. They just want to run everything according to some rules they got, regardless of what anybody else wants or how they feel. Johnson's the boss around here on the day shift and I swear she's the worst. I mean like what she said to you—'You don't get one, do you, Mrs. Sanderson?' That's terrible. I'm sincerely sorry, Mrs. Sanderson, really I am. And I know how you feel, too, because I lost one myself once. It would have been the second—no, the third. I still have a Mass said for her every year on the day. Ouch! Listen, Frankie, you *will* get a bottle if you're going to bite like that."

Natalie was all dressed and waiting in the sun room with her suitcase when her husband arrived for the afternoon visiting hours.

NICK STAYED HOME from the office for a few days. Natalie told him that she felt fine and he shouldn't, but he said that he would have taken time off to help her when the baby came anyway and so he certainly might as well help her now. He said he wanted to make perfectly sure she was all right because that was all that really mattered to him. But there was actually not much helping for him to do in a three-room apartment, and except for his asking her how she felt and her saying fine, they didn't even talk a great deal. It wasn't so much that they felt reluctant to mention what had happened as that there seemed to be so little to say. And yet they didn't particularly feel like talking about anything else. Finally Natalie said, "Look, this is silly. We're just getting on each other's nerves. I'd really feel better if you went back to work."

Nick frowned. "Well, if you're perfectly sure that you're all right," he said, "I suppose I should be getting back." He came out of the bathroom while he was still shaving and said earnestly, "We'll have another one, Nat, really we will. It was just rotten luck this time. And anyway, next time maybe we can really plan it and be better fixed for it. I know how you feel, but everything's going to be all right, really it is." While he was eating breakfast he read her things that interested him out of the paper for the first time that week.

IN SOME WAYS it did make Natalie feel better to realize that by and large Nick had put the subject behind him, even though she had not. She found herself wasting hours trying to answer the fulsomely routine letters that came in from relatives and some of her mother's friends back home. Since the Sandersons were new in the city, they knew only a few people from Nick's office and had no close friends, but even the nameless people who lived in the same large apartment building with them had somehow heard about the

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midnight ambulance and felt called upon to mumble a few embarrassed words of what seemed almost like apology when they met her in the elevator. She wrote a peevish letter to her older brother thanking him sarcastically for his amateur psychoanalysis—he had warned her against imagining that she had made it happen on purpose—and concluded that it was very funny how everybody in the world seemed to know exactly what emotions to feel and what words to say about her experience except her.

AMONG the messages of sympathy came other letters printed on glossy paper beginning, "Dear Mother, Of course you want nothing but the very best for the new little charmer who's come to live at your house, and this brief note is simply to let you know that we feel the same way you do about baby's first puréed fruits and vegetables." For a while hardly any mail delivery was without a certificate redeemable for one week's free trial diaper service, a sample of baby food, or a circular about preserving shoes in bronze. There were even phone calls—a photographer who said he specialized in infants began by offering a free eight-by-ten portrait, and she cut another woman off in the middle of an elaborate description of a combination high chair, stroller, and car seat by just saying, "No, thank you," and hanging up. One man who said he needed Nick's office phone number turned out to be a life-insurance salesman.

Nick was mad when he heard about the other phone calls and saw some of the mail. He called one of the baby-food manufacturers and finally got a girl in public relations who said she was very sorry for the inconvenience but it was against company policy to disclose the source of their mailing lists and so far as she knew there was no way of taking one individual name off the list. A man in the cashier's office at the hospital interrupted Nick to say, "Well, after all, birth certificates are a matter of public record, so it would scarcely be fair to claim that anyone here had betrayed a trust." When Nick shouted at him that there was no birth, it was a miscarriage, the man said he was sorry but the woman who handled this sort of problem was on vacation just then, and could he take the number and have her call in a week or so?

ONE AFTERNOON while Natalie was lying down for a nap after lunch the doorbell rang. A well-dressed florid woman of indeterminate age held out her gloved hand and said, "You must be Natalie Sanderson. I'm Edith White." She paused as if to give Natalie a chance to recognize the name, but then rushed on, "Oh, you don't know me. I'm just a neighbor of yours, and I just thought I'd like to stop by for a moment and get acquainted. May I come in? Mr. White is always telling me that even people who have lived right next door to each other for ten or fifteen years aren't supposed to even speak to each other any more, but I guess I'm just a small-town girl at heart. Let me just set my bag down here." She was carrying a large and rather frayed imitation patent-leather shoulder bag that seemed to be quite heavy. Seated with contrived informality on the edge of Nick's footstool, the woman smiled up expectantly from under the wide brim of a straw picture hat.

"Do you live in this same entry, Mrs. White?" asked Natalie. "I haven't noticed your name on the mailbox."

"No, dear, I live just around the corner. Won't you sit down so we can talk?" Suddenly she put her hand to her ear and said, "Did I hear her? She must be just waking up. Oh, I can't wait to see her. I'll bet she's just adorable."

Before Natalie had fully understood and could break in, the visitor lowered her head to work with her bag and began talking again. "Let me show you the real reason I just had to come, dear, the minute I heard. You see, through a friend of Mr. White's who's in publishing I've been given the opportunity to show young parents like yourself these perfectly magnificent books. They actually grow with the child—that is, the whole set does—right from the first picture and alphabet books on up through the high-school educational supplements. And with the condition our public schools are in these days, I'm sure you agree with Mr. White and I that . . ."

"Mrs. White, there is no baby. One of the interns carried it away in a stainless-steel pan without even letting me see it."

The visitor looked at Natalie, still smiling, again seeming to wait courteously for Natalie to say something else. Then she looked down at a thin volume with a picture of a bear in blue overalls on the cover and began turning the pages, concentrating on the large print and the cute pictures. Without looking up she said, "Jesus, have you got a glass of sherry in the house, dear?" It was a strange and deeper voice than she had used before.

Natalie opened the door and said, "I think you had better go now, Mrs. White." The woman's head jerked involuntarily to one side as if to receive a blow and she shot a look of animal suspicion and stealth at Natalie. Two prominent veins throbbed on her temple beyond the abrupt edge of her thick make-up. Returning the book to her bag, she drew out an untidy lace handkerchief with which she wiped her eyes and patted her nose elaborately. "Of course, my dear," she said in an offended tone, her composure fully restored, "I know just how you feel." She laid her gloved fingers on Natalie's arm as she got to her feet. "About the sherry," she whispered in a mock-confidential tone, "I just thought it might do both of us good after our little accidental misunderstanding." She put together a brave smile. "And, of course, my dear, I do know how you feel, believe me. If there's anything I can do to help pull you out of this, I truly wish you'd let me. Remember, we all have our sorrows, but they do pass away after all in time, and sometimes just talking it out with someone helps a lot. I do wish I could convince you before I go that some day you'll have your other lovely children around you and you'll look back and not think a thing about this whole period, dear." She patted Natalie's arm again and smiled. "Do me a favor, will you? When that day comes, remember Edith White and remember these wonderful books. That's how sure I am that everything's going to turn out all right."

After Natalie had closed the door she went into the bedroom and lay face down across the bed, giving way at last to deep, purposeful sobbing.

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MOVIES

The Celluloid Thaw

CYNTHIA GRENIER

A FRESH NEW WIND is blowing in from the East in the world of films. At every major international film festival last year, the quality of many of these Iron Curtain films made western viewers take startled notice. In an aggregate of perhaps thirty films, one suddenly had a look at something rare and satisfying: fresh, original work of a high artistic level, with hardly a trace of the old heavy-handed propagandistic overtones. In western Europe these films have been creating a reaction comparable to that aroused by the first great postwar films from Italy (*Shoe Shine, Open City, The Bicycle Thief*) and Britain (*Odd Man Out, Brief Encounter, Henry V*).

Not surprisingly, the first signs of this unusual movement appeared in Poland and Hungary, just prior to their revolutions of October, 1956. A few years earlier, the films of both countries had been unfailingly tendentious in their treatment of contemporary subjects and stereotyped in their protrayal of human beings. Thus, the leading Polish director, Aleksander Ford, one of the first to focus on the individual and his problems, encountered a fair amount of official trouble for this very quality over two films made before October, 1956. *That Others May Live* (1946-1947) earned Stalin's personal condemnation for having a Jewish rather than a working-class hero. Stalin is reported as feeling that the film gave too much credit to the Jews' heroic struggle during the destruction of the Ghetto without reflecting sufficient glory on the role played by the Communists and People's Army. Despite such august disapproval the film was released in Poland, but only after its very considerable success at the Venice Film Festival. Ford's film on juvenile delinquency, *Five Boys from Barska Street,* also got the director in hot water because it was said to slander Polish youth. Again the success of the film abroad seems to have saved the director and helped open the road for more forthright films.

Since October, 1956, the Polish film industry has been reorganized, giving the twenty-odd feature-film directors a very large degree of independence from the bureaucrats. Some thirty films are made each year. Directors can now suggest projects to their production groups. According to their own report, they are quite free, provided they do not attack the government too directly.

Love and the Housing Shortage

Last year the Poles turned up in the film-festival circuit with two highly unorthodox feature films. *The Eighth Day of the Week,* a Polish-West German co-production directed by Ford, has a scenario by young novelist Marek Hlasko. Scheduled for showing at the Cannes festival in May, then withdrawn at the last minute because of official Polish objections, it was finally presented at Venice as a West German entry. It has a simple story. Two young people meet and fall in love, but because of housing conditions are unable to find a place to make love. The constant frustrations lead to friction, until the girl in desperation gets drunk with a disreputable journalist who has a large apartment, and is seduced by him just as the boy finds an apartment.

Handsomely photographed, with appealing, sensitive performances from the young principals, the film has certain surprises, such as a graphically realistic seduction scene that goes far beyond any French or Italian film. The general mood of the film is bitter and pessimistic, reflecting a despairing, disgusted acceptance of the moral lassitude brought about through the corruption allowed by the régime. This is also the theme of a number of Hlasko's stories. The Polish authorities have refused to let the film be released at home or abroad, stating that while it may have its merits as a film, it paints a too unrelievedly black portrait of contemporary conditions, giving no credit to any improvement since the 1956 revolt. It seems likely, however, that Americans will have an opportunity of viewing this work shortly, since an American distributor has managed to secure U.S. rights as a result of a technical oversight.

Although this particular film did run into official censure, perhaps as much because of the controversial character of its young author as for its content, other equally critical though less bleak films have met no such difficulty. *Eva Wants to Sleep,* which won the grand prize at Spain's San Sebastián Festival last summer, thumbs its nose at authority and pricks the balloon of a Communist state. The story can be summarized innocently enough as the tale of a young girl's arrival in a strange town the night before the school term opens and her search for lodgings. In her effort to find a room, she is taken in charge by the local police station. At every turn of the plot the police are revealed as comically and lamentably inefficient. A board hung with outsized kitchen implements labeled "torture equipment" is periodically lost. In each room hangs a satirical portrait of a Big Brother figure. The puritanism of the Communist state is roundly mocked when a young policeman tries to get Eva a room in a hotel for women workers, the entry of which is decorated with slogans on the evils of sex and exhortations to lead a pure worker's life. The arrival of the officer causes an alarm to be sounded through the hotel, and from every room men in various states of undress run, hide in closets, duck under beds, and leap out of windows. No opportunity is missed to ridicule the authority of the state. Interestingly enough, despite the film's success in Poland and the West, none of the other member states of the Soviet bloc have distributed it.

IN THE SAME spirited anarchistic nature of *Eva,* the Poles have been producing a collection of remarkable documentary and experimental films. At the Experimental Film Festival held last April in Brussels, two young Poles, Walerian Borozszyk and Jan Lenica, won the $10,000 first prize for a crisp, original ten-minute film,

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Dom, which—in a manner not entirely unrelated to the Dada and surrealist films of France—projects a fine sense of revolt and irritation with convention while poetically evoking the meaning of "home." The Short Subject Festival held at Tours, France, in December offered another film by the same pair, this time a vitriolic piece about love as viewed by Communist state art, with music supplied, according to the titles, by the State Gas Works Orchestra.

The Past Is Safer

The wave of freedom in Polish cinema is perhaps to be expected, whereas to discover that the Hungarians since the revolution are still enjoying a startling degree of cinematographic liberty is surprising. Just before October, 1956, the Hungarians had shown the West a series of beautifully photographed, skillfully acted films all set in the pre-socialist era: *A Glass of Beer, Professor Hannibal, The Merry-Go-Round, A Sunday Romance.* The emphasis in these films was on the personal, the individual drama. The background of a bourgeois state presumably represented economic and social distress that was now no longer known. As a Soviet bloc director said at one western film festival last year, "We'd rather work with stories set in the past. It gives us greater artistic liberty. Besides, one would like to make honest films, and it's not so easy to be honest about contemporary affairs."

Although the revolution saw the imprisonment of some leading Hungarian actors and the flight of many technicians, enough remained behind to continue making good films. One of the strangest and most interesting Hungarian films to be presented in the West is *At Midnight,* made and released last year, which sets a love story against the background of the 1956 revolution. Shown at the Brussels Festival in June, it was expected to be a stock propaganda explanation and condemnation of the uprising; instead it proved to be mature, sophisticated, and objective. One scene showed the hero and heroine standing in a long bread line in Budapest, being shoved and pushed. Machine-gun fire is heard, the line breaks up, the pair run a short distance and the woman, stopping for breath, exclaims, "I simply can't stand living here any more."

They make plans to escape. At the last minute the man decides to stay behind, giving as his reason the fact that he is a well-known actor in Budapest, where he lives comfortably, but abroad what can he do? The girl, a dancer, says that freedom is more important. She leaves.

According to thirty-year-old director György Revesz, *At Midnight* is having an unprecedented success in Budapest. Hungarian refugees who have seen this film in one festival or another say that it presents the feeling of the revolution with remarkable accuracy. They observe, however, that it avoids any actual political discussion.

Other Hungarian films, such as *The Iron Flower, The Conspirators,* and *The House at the Foot of the Rock* are still set in the 1920's, and deal essentially with the problem of maintaining human dignity in the

face of poverty. Although the films could be interpreted by a political commissar as showing how backward life was in pre-Communist days, they seem to any western viewer more like a strong, moving testimonial to the strength and importance of the individual. The complexity of the characters and situations gives these films a richness and depth reached by hardly any present-day western films.

The Yugoslavs, who, unlike the Poles or Hungarians, had almost no cinema industry to speak of before the war, have been catching up with a series of feature films reminiscent of the Italian neo-realist school. Emphasis here too has been on the individual and his problems, usually cast in postwar situations dealing with the housing shortage or with youth. In the area of animation the Yugoslavs have in the past five years revealed an unusual skill. Although their humor tends to be somewhat slow and heavy, visually these cartoons are far ahead of even our best. The Czechs, with a long reputation for technically perfect puppet and cartoon films if not for political daring, have also recently been venturing into more imaginative and individualistic realms. A still from almost any of their more recent cartoons could easily grace the pages of *Graphis* or the *Design Annual.* Karel Zeman's *The Diabolic Invention,* which was the unanimous choice for the grand prize of the Brussels Film Festival, is a wondrously deft utilization of animation and live figures combined to look like living pages from the illustrations of Jules Verne's books.

Even the Russians

The Soviet state itself does not seem immune to this breath of freedom. One of the first evidences of this trend was *The Forty-First,* which won a prize at Cannes in 1957. The very fact that the hero, an aristocratic White Army officer, could be shown as both charming and intelligent was in itself a notable advance. The sturdy little heroine, although a character almost completely in the Soviet cinema's old style, was still made to appear a little ridiculous while composing her inflated poetry. At the same time, *The Forty-First* was restricted by a banal plot, and its characters could only achieve a very limited degree of complexity.

Since that time, however, the Soviets have shown the West a good half-dozen films with real individuals for heroes—people with virtues and defects, enthusiasms and weaknesses, beliefs and doubts. In the past, in casting roles for Soviet films, it too often seemed that the "good" people had to have fine, noble faces with suitably high-principled expressions, the better to fit the archetype. Nowadays the actors look as if they had been cast for their fitness for the role rather than for their resemblance to some ideal of the Soviet worker. On the feminine side, the beefy, tractor-driving lasses have lately given way to surprisingly svelte and pretty creatures, heroines who tend to be high-spirited, capricious, on occasion even flirtatious, and who can achieve an elegance of their own.

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At a time when the Soviet films are rediscovering the merits of more individual and human characterization, of greater depth of psychological motivation, they also seem to be looking more discerningly and accurately at contemporary life. Thus, the prize-winning and highly successful *The Cranes Are Flying* gives us a fairly realistic view of the interior of some Soviet homes, though there are apparent efforts to make circumstances look rather more materially comfortable and attractive than reports from Russia have suggested. (It is extremely doubtful, for instance, whether a family of four would have had a large Moscow apartment to themselves just before the Second World War.) Still, the film does give an impression of the Soviet citizen's daily life which seems to ring true in detail and which was never given before. When the son of the family goes off to war, his old grandmother makes the sign of the Cross over him. The gesture is taken very much for granted, accepted by the other people in the scene as the grandmother intended it; there are no snide remarks about the opium of the people or Grandmother's dotage. A small but encouraging detail.

On the visual side as well, the Russian directors, after years of sterile, dry social realism, are seeking inspiration from their great men: Eisenstein, Dovzhenko, Pudovkin. They seem increasingly aware of the vast range of visual potentialities available to them. It is interesting to note that ten years after it was made by Eisenstein and banned by Stalin, the Soviets have finally decided to release Part II of *Ivan the Terrible*. It is easy to see why Stalin banned this rough-hewn but impressive document. Intended as an apologia for the blood purges, with Ivan's career paralleling Stalin's, the film instead presents Ivan as a tortured neurotic asking God and himself whether he has the right to slay so many, and for what reason. The release of the film in the Soviet Union and western Europe now seems to fit in some basic way with the entire new movement in the Iron Curtain film industry. Whether this movement will or can continue to grow remains to be seen.

BOOKS

A Gifted Boy from the Midlands

ALFRED KAZIN

There were—there are—many countries that far more actively practice inequality than does England; surely there is none in which people *care* so much about keeping up the external form of it. Poor but brilliant boys can advance very fast and very high in England; the cabinet, the upper civil service, Oxford and Cambridge—all ranks are open to the deserving, all are full of exceptional men whose fathers were crofters, clerks, insurance agents. Yet there is not one of them, in my experience, who has not been permanently branded by self-consciousness, who has not had to become intellectually sharper, more competitive and wary than is always natural to the development of genuine gifts.

This situation is really serious in literature, which has always been close to the central sources of power. The "lower-class" writer who is not a genius like Dickens or D. H. Lawrence, the writer who can no longer operate within a revolutionary framework as did H. G. Wells, is handicapped by the traditional connection between literature and society. The English writer finds himself in a period when the revolutionary *élan* is gone, when no young radical from the provinces can identify himself with the scientific utopianism of Wells's time, when the Labour Party is dispirited and "angry" young novelists announce publicly that they are bored with it. It is difficult for such writers to put themselves forward. In the past the great energy of writers like Dickens and Lawrence and Wells was that they represented the revolutionary new impulse that would make England over in their image. Dickens accomplished this by his effect on social reform and Lawrence by his moral influence on the intelligentsia. But in our time, when England has become not only a declining power but when its radicals can no longer muster the challenge to power, the rising writer must find a new myth, some ruling idea to connect with.

This is the social situation behind the novels of C. P. Snow. Snow's situation in contemporary fiction often appears more unusual than it really is: he was trained as a physicist, did research in crystallography, and during the war was in an important government post as a director of scientific personnel. Because of this background, Snow has often written about science with more intimate and exact knowledge than literary men can usually muster. But as a critic he has unfortunately tended to attack the "novel of sensibility"—so often identified with Virginia Woolf and Bloomsbury—as if his scientific background itself had given him some healthier and saner perspective, one that could assist the literary imagination, so hard-pressed by science in our time, to become more usefully concerned with "reality." This suggestion that writers would do better if they knew more about science seems to me misleading. Snow's animus against the "novel of sensibility," the highly formal art novel, is surely based on the exclusiveness, both social and aesthetic, of the Bloomsbury School even more than it is on any special insights Snow may have derived from science. It is part of the age-old quarrel in English literature between H. G. Wells and Henry James, between the school of experience and a wholly aesthetic coterie. There is an irreducible gap between the intellectual elite of Bloomsbury and self-made writers from the Midlands like C. P. Snow; between a social experience like Virginia Woolf's, so comfortable that it permitted a life wholly devoted to art, and one like C. P. Snow's, whose novels tell over and over of the struggles of poor boys for careers.

Snow's frequent invocation of science does not convince me that

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the literary imagination can somehow broaden itself, become more balanced and wise, by learning science. It is simply his way, as a novelist, of connecting himself with the new rulers: the scientists themselves. Snow, born in 1905, arrived too late to believe in science as Utopia, a faith that failed even Wells in the last years of his life. But unlike young novelists whom he tends to connect with himself, writers who tend to be sunk in the minutiae of provincial and domestic life, "kitchen" novelists, Snow *is* old enough to have grown up believing in the ascendancy of poor boys to power, in the great career as a real subject, and this seems to me the essential concern behind his novels.

THERE ARE no contemporary novels quite like the *Strangers and Brothers* cycle; one reason is that they are not altogether novels. Snow, in opposing his work to the formal aesthetic of Woolf and Joyce, has also saved himself from artistic risks and demands in which he is not interested. Snow's work is entirely personal in spirit and theme; it is as essentially private a form as any work so deeply autobiographical and historical must be. These seven novels are the record of a man's career, and the different volumes often depend on the reader's own historical experience and sympathy, on his awareness of other details in the series, in a way that makes the reading of Snow's books an emotional experience rather than the experience of an objective work of art. These novels are unusual, but they do not, as some of Snow's admirers often glibly suggest, offer a new technique to the English novel. No books so loosely personal in form can give a pattern to other novelists. Snow's achievement is a tragic conception of life, founded on the contrast between the will with which a gifted boy makes his way up in England and the accidents of life that determine his actual fate.

One of the most striking things about Snow's novels is that they are remarkably intelligent and exceedingly melancholy. They have none of the careless hearty vigor, the animal force, that one associates with English writers of the "people." They are so obviously the products of a man who has had to think long and hard that one of the real pleasures in reading Snow is actually the way in which he draws the reader into this gentle activity of reason. Characters in Snow's work are not so much presented as interpreted; the narrator and central figure in the series, Lewis Eliot, spins everything out of his reflections and memories. The method of reminiscence permits Snow the greatest possible freedom as a novelist. He can refer to incidents in preceding books, or point ahead to others; he can refer passingly to a story, like the unhappy marriage of Lewis Eliot himself, which he has begun in one novel, *Time of Hope*, and will conclude several years later in *Homecoming*. The frame is always Lewis Eliot's own career inside contemporary English history, politics, business, and university life. Again and again, as in an autobiography, Snow will refer to a date, 1938 or 1940, so that the reader will fill out the sketchy picture for himself, and he often refers to activities not seen on stage, activities that are merely named, in a way that would have horrified a novelist like Conrad, who said that above all the novelist must make the reader *see*. There are many details, scenes, characters in Snow's work that he does not bother to make us see; and what we do see is filtered through the interpretative wariness of Lewis Eliot's mind, who has learned from childhood to examine, to dissect, to understand quickly, to size up.

THIS WARINESS seems to me basic to the psychology of Snow's novels; it fascinates me because it is so obviously an English social habit that has been made full use of in creating character. Lewis Eliot makes his way up in the English world, from a poor family and a clerk's job; he becomes a barrister, an adviser to a powerful industrialist, a Fellow at Cambridge, and, during the war, one of the administrators of the secret atom-bomb project. As he recounts the various episodes in his life, he interprets people around him constantly in terms of their powers and possibilities, on how much they measure up to. The emphasis on the will, starting from Lewis Eliot's own will to escape the provinces, is as significant as Eliot's emphasis on brains. In the English fashion, the highest places are open—but only to the highest possible concentration of ability, energy, devotion. To an American, used to the waste, the self-indulgence, and the salesmanship that are so rife in a country that is only beginning to recognize the need for trained intellectuals, there is indescribable fascination in Snow's constant concern with the competitive English elite and with his own marvelous powers for sizing up character.

It is no wonder that C. P. Snow was chosen to administer scientific personnel and that he was recently knighted for this work; he has an awareness of people such as only a poor and gifted boy who has had to depend for everything on his intellectual resources can develop; it reminds me of the sharp, rousing, malicious, but uncomfortably objective conversation of English scholars gossiping in commons rooms about each other. The field is open, the race is to the best; every possible trait of energy, decision, confidence, counts in the final sum. This is a society of ambitious people who have learned to sharpen their wits on each other. Snow is able to tell us things about poor law clerks in small towns (*Strangers and Brothers*), Cambridge dons (*The Light and the Dark* and *The Masters*), lawyers and industrialists and even provincial clergymen (*Time of Hope*), rich English Jews (*The Conscience of the Rich*), and atomic scientists (*The New Men*) that make us realize how fascinating, how stimulating to a novelist's powers can be a society full of intellectuals on the make, delicately balancing off against each other native gifts, racial background, physical strength, energy, stubbornness, originality. No wonder, I often think when I read Snow, that the English did so many primary studies in genius, in character, in race; no wonder that they have so blunt and realistic a conception of power and are so brutally frank to each other about different races. They size up men as coldly as a trainer examining horseflesh, yet their public manner is always careful, starched, externally "correct"—and this, too, is strength.

It is this theme that makes Snow's novels always absorbing. The interest of characters who appear always from this competitive point of view

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is immense: lawyers like George Passant, Herbert Getliffe, and Eliot himself; physicists like Francis Getliffe and Nightingale, doctors like Charles March; scholars like Roy Calvert and the old master, Winslow. Even aristocrats like Lord Boscastle in *The Light and the Dark* try consciously, in the interests of their own superiority, to beat down the middle-class traits surrounding them. These are people who are always vying with each other, who are quick to note the slightest gaucherie, to count on the subtlest weakness. Yet what redeems this world from hardness, what keeps it from the viciousness and even murderousness that one associates with similar themes in French fiction, is the fact that this competition is for prizes all can agree on. The national idea is so strong that the code of the gentleman operates with equal force on those who must approach it from the outside. There is a sense of professional excellence, of scholarly truth, which, when it is lacking, works against the aspirant as severely as if he were found stealing. In Snow's recently reissued first novel, *The Search,* the physicist-hero gives up science altogether when he realizes that his sense of truth is not as compelling as his ambition for power. It is characteristic of the *esprit de corps* that is built into this competitiveness in England that the hero judges himself, and finally excludes himself from science, as sharply as if he were one scientist sitting in judgment on another.

THE ONLY FORCE in Snow's novels that works against this emphasis on personal ambition is the sometimes tragic mystery of personality, which often unmakes the career that the will has made. The pervasive melancholy of Snow's work comes from his constant sense of the trickiness of the human heart, the perverseness and indisposability of human character, which binds us to people we should not love, to actions that are destructive of everything we value. The *Strangers and Brothers* series is actually a succession of tragic individuals—George Passant the reckless optimist, Roy Calvert the brilliant Orientalist who is a manic-depressive, Jago the candidate in *The Masters* who is defeated because his wife seems to others unfit to occupy the master's lodge, Martin Eliot in *The New Men,* old March in *The Conscience of the Rich.* The chief symbol of this recurrent defeat is Lewis Eliot himself, who marries an unstable woman, Sheila Knight, and cares for her so desperately that he is prevented from reaching the highest place in his profession. It is typical of Snow's instant use of explanation in presenting character, and of the humanity and sadness of his explanation, that Lewis's attachment to Sheila is explained as a passion for "waifs," for victims, that allows him to keep his privacy. At the end of *Homecoming,* when Lewis finally decides to marry a woman

who is much better for him, he consciously affirms that he can now give himself fully to a woman, that he can drop the "spectator" position, the watchful, marginal strategy that has always been behind his passion for helping others.

BUT the real significance of this "spectator" position lies in the fact that it permits Snow—through Lewis Eliot—to spin novels richly and continuously out of his reserve of private meditation. Although Snow has often written about the novel as if he had a healthier and broader interest in society than "sensibility" novelists like Virginia Woolf, although some of his more enthusiastic admirers have often suggested that Snow has invented a new form, the truth is that the "spectator" position which Eliot feels has protected him from involvement is actually the strategic position which has permitted Snow to write so many interesting novels at a time when many writers are in despair about the novel as a form. Despite Snow's strictures against excessive personal sensibility in fiction, his own work depends on such sensibility; and what James called the "foreground observer," the leading character who unites all strands of a story in his central consciousness, is fundamental to Snow's work. All the virtues and all the faults of Snow's writing stem from the elastic control made possible by the foreground observer, the hero as thinker. It gives him the range, the social scene, that is the great strength of the books, the fascination of society that returns us to the living stream of the novel. On the other hand, it also means the mechanical scenes of revery, the half-sentimental night walks in all of Snow's novels which are so nerveless and weak, scenes which make us feel that Snow, in his reliance on analytical intelligence, has gone as far with character as explanation as he can go, and that he is merely catching his breath. There is a slackness of artistic rhythm in Snow's books, a marked decline of intensity, that makes us realize that in depending upon his remarkable intelligence and the external history of England since 1925, he has worked out the urgent emotions that took the brilliant boy to London. He has not yet assimilated fully into his scheme the persistent theme of social inequality that has become more and more a burden on the imagination of England. At a wedding party of two aristocrats in *Homecoming,* Lewis Eliot, looking around him, thinks:

"When I had first met them both, it had seemed to us all self-evident that society was loosening and that soon most people would be indifferent to class. We had turned out wrong. In our forties we had to recognise that English society had become more rigid, not less, since our youth. Its forms were crystallizing under our eyes into an elaborate and codified Byzantinism, decent enough, tolerable to live in, but not blown through by the winds of scepticism or individual protest or sense of outrage which were our native air. And these forms were not only too cut-and-dried for us: they would have seemed altogether too rigid for nineteenth-century Englishmen . . . quite little things had, under our eyes, got fixed, and except for catastrophes, fixed for good."

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The Shadow of a War

IRVING KRISTOL

IN EVERY WAR BUT ONE, by Eugene Kinkead. *Norton. $3.75.*

Of the making of sermons on this book there will be no end. Indeed, ever since Mr. Kinkead's original *New Yorker* article, of which this book is an expansion, the trend toward earnest self-examination has been gaining momentum, and we can now expect a deluge of anxious, to say nothing of agitated, rhetoric on the general theme of what has gone wrong with Our Way of Life. Much of it will inevitably be boring, flatulent, and self-serving. But one ought not really to mind, for the story related here is as scandalous as it is true—even if, as I shall suggest, it is not the whole truth.

"In every war but one that the United States has fought, the conduct of those of its servicemen who were captured and held in enemy prison camps presented no unforeseen problems to the armed forces and gave rise to no particular concern in the country as a whole." Whereas it is a fact that in the Korean War one in seven American prisoners of war was guilty of serious collaboration with the enemy; that one in three was involved in milder forms of collaboration; that the death rate of thirty-eight per cent among American POWs was directly traceable to ineptitude, indifference, and downright callousness among the men themselves. The revelation of such facts is bound to cause a commotion.

These men, after all, are not strangers in our midst. Following Mr. Kinkead in his investigation of them, we pursue ourselves. And the shock of this book is to a considerable extent the shock of self-recognition. All they were doing was to "play it cool"—that is the very phrase they used to explain, and presumably to justify, compliance with the wishes (to say nothing of the commands) of their Chinese captors. And "playing it cool" is something we have all had a direct experience of, even if it never occurred to us that it could be extended to such lengths. It is the phrase that most aptly sums up the individual's isolation within our massive community; his sense that our grandly advertised ideals are but another exercise in salesmanship, not to be taken seriously and never literally; that events, and our own destinies above all, are matters beyond all personal control and responsibility; that it's each man for himself and let free enterprise take the hindmost. In the attitudes of the American prisoners there is to be discerned an odd combination of the calculating organization man and the unreasoning juvenile delinquent, leading to the inference that, when you come down to it, the two have more in common than either would like to think.

Mr. Kinkead's report of how the Army investigation was carried on makes fascinating reading, and his summary of the Army's reaction to the whole affair is most competently done. Obviously, the Army has become keenly aware of the need in the future for greater discipline among its recruits, for a changed emphasis—from the Army as an attractive career to the Army as an honorable service—in its recruiting appeals, for the increasing of the authority of noncommissioned and junior officers (Mr. Kinkead has some particularly relevant criticism of the well-meant follies engendered by the Doolittle Report on "democratizing" the armed services), for a transformation in the American ethos itself that will encourage those military virtues (loyalty, self-reliance, self-sacrifice) which the American soldier was once noted for and which have been stifled by our hedonistic pursuit of consumer "goods," etc. Obviously, too, the Army has no clearer idea than the rest of us of how all this is to come about. Instructing one's children in the Golden Rule, which is what one officer suggested to Mr. Kinkead, is a perfectly good idea, if not exactly original; but the Golden Rule is only too likely, as things now stand, to end up as nothing more than a highly topical singing commercial.

BUT Mr. Kinkead's is a disturbing book in more ways than one. It raises not only profound moral issues but some simpler questions of journalistic ethics as well. One such question is: where does journalism end and where does public relations begin?

To put the matter bluntly: what Mr. Kinkead presents us with is a skillful, popularly written *official* Army report that will be accepted

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by the unwary reader as an independent journalistic inquiry. This explains what is without doubt the most extraordinary feature of the book: *there is not a single interview with a former POW in it.* In his preface, Mr. Kinkead explains: "I decided to assemble the data in an interview pattern which would, I hoped, maintain the quality of human poignancy and lend cumulative narrative strength." A good idea, one immediately concedes. But when these interviews turn out to be entirely with official Army spokesmen, one cannot help but wonder about Mr. Kinkead's conception of "human poignancy." In this same preface, there is to be found the following statement: "In the almost three years that it has taken me to assemble and analyze the material, the Army offered unstinted aid, *and in due course what I wrote was approved by the Department of Defense.* The fact that the Army, once it decided to go ahead, was not only willing, but eager, to devote a great deal of time to a citizen journalist who had much to learn as he went along is, I believe, an inspiriting sign of the vigor of our democracy." The italics are very much mine; and it doesn't seem to me that the Army's procedure was as altruistic as all that.

THEN there is the peculiar episode mentioned in the first chapter. Originally, Mr. Kinkead's collaborator on this study was to have been Professor John Dollard of Yale, one of the nation's leading social psychologists. Mr. Dollard, however, was forced to withdraw because Army officials "said that the problem of Korean prisoner behavior was not one to be tackled from the viewpoint of psychiatry or psychology alone; *and in cases in which these things were important, the Army psychologists and psychiatrists were the ones to explain the study's conclusions.*" Once again, my italics.

Now, it is rare enough for a journalist to submit his copy to his informants for approval; but it is, one would have thought, unthinkable for a journalist to allow his informants to dictate the conclusions of his study. If Mr. Kinkead really is persuaded that this is a sign of inspiriting democratic vigor, the American rot has gone deeper than even he imagines. (The official flavor of the book, incidentally, carries over into the very subtitles at the head of each chapter—e.g.: "Introductory Views of Honorable Hugh M. Milton II, Assistant Secretary of the Army.")

I do not want to seem to be laboring this point. There is no reason to think that Mr. Kinkead has given us anything but as fair and accurate a picture as he is capable of. Still, this aspect of the work ought not to be permitted to pass unnoticed and, besides, it helps explain some of the annoying deficiencies of what is clearly an important book. Usually one wishes that sociologists could write like *New Yorker* contributors; in this case one wishes a *New Yorker* writer had some rudimentary sense of the techniques of sociological investigation and of what it means to conduct an inquiry that does not rely totally on official handouts. We are given surprisingly little information about these 7,190 American prisoners of war. On page 105 we learn in passing that the "progressives'" (i.e., the collaborators') formal education had, on the average, ended with the ninth grade of school; and elsewhere we are told that they were between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four, came from the lower-income urban and rural groups, and were "usually, though not always" [*sic*] of superior intelligence. This is not very enlightening—and it is most regrettable that Professor Dollard was not around to help us interpret this information. If one is going to use these sparse facts as a basis for general statements, not only about what was wrong with these particular soldiers but about what is wrong with America today—as Mr. Kinkead does, and invites us to do—there is too great a likelihood of talking beside the point.

ONE WONDERS why Mr. Kinkead never did go out to interview any of the former "progressive" POWs, even if merely to discover what they thought and felt now that they were back home. Did the Army go so far as to insist that his sources be limited *only* to what it supplied him? In any case, and whatever the explanation, he thereby missed the opportunity to explore what is probably the most appalling disclosure of this book: the fantastic ease with which the Chinese were able to indoctrinate our soldiers—to an extent where seventy-five of them actually returned, equipped with secret codes and all, ready to engage in long-term espionage and subversion against their native land. As Mr. Kinkead does make clear, these men were not "brainwashed," not subjected to torture or to intolerably wearying interrogation, not broken physically or mentally. The Chinese reserved such techniques for their own people, limiting themselves in the case of captured American soldiers to the simplest imaginable mixture of petty coercion and monotonous propaganda. It is perplexing, to put it mildly. How on earth did the Chinese manage it?

I do not see that any general explanation pertaining to the shortcomings of American life and American society can in and of itself sufficiently explain this singular event. It is not as if these men actually were converted, out of disillusionment with American democracy, into convinced and articulate Communists—hardly any of them, even those prepared to commit high treason, were; and it is indeed difficut to see how the kind of childish and idiotic propaganda that the Chinese had recourse to could have really persuaded anyone of anything. It was not, so far as one can judge, indoctrination that persuaded the G.I.s to play it cool; rather, it was their determination to play it cool that led them inexorably into collaboration, and eventually into accepting a rationale for this collaboration.

AND HERE we come up against a critical problem, which neither Mr. Kinkead nor his Army spokesmen so much as mention. The problem can be stated simply: The Korean War was the most unpopular war in our history; and one reason lay in the fact that it was a limited war—limited in its scope and also limited in terms of popular participation. It was not a war that mobilized the emotional and physical energies of the entire American people. Not only was it a limited war; it was a most peculiar kind of limited war. It was an undeclared war against

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an unidentified enemy. Its aims were generally uncomprehended, possibly because they were never adequately explained by the Truman administration. And the conduct of the war was as equivocal as its purpose.

Indeed, for most Americans the war meant precious little in the way of sacrifice and a great deal in the way of prosperity. One small accidentally selected group of Americans was called upon to bear the total brunt of this war and within this group a smaller one was fated to bear the ordeal of imprisonment. Does it surprise anyone that they should have felt resentful and aggrieved? That they should have seen themselves as sacrificial pawns in a complicated game of international diplomacy? That they should be so vulnerable to demoralization?

"In every war but one," the entire American nation was at war. That one was the Korean War. And among the many lessons it proposes is the extreme difficulty with which any democracy can carry on a limited war—the very kind of war which, it is agreed, we must be prepared to wage henceforth along the perimeter of the free world. Democracies can be successfully inspired to fight a general war; we know that. But can we, at one and the same time, preserve this spirit in an epoch when a general war would be not only a catastrophe but a crime? It is the shadow of this dilemma that Mr. Kinkead's book casts over us like a pall.

IN CONCLUSION, however, two encouraging observations are in order. First, despite the tragic facts related by Mr. Kinkead, our military performance in Korea was good—and by the time the armistice came, when our soldiers were familiar with Chinese techniques, it was excellent. (It is worth more emphasis than Mr. Kinkead gives it that the overwhelming majority of his case histories were taken prisoner *early* in the war.) Second, and not unconnected with the first, though we had our defectors the Chinese Communists had far, far more of them. If limited war offers a troublesome problem for democracies, it seems to present a no less serious one to its enemies.

Trivia from Russia

NORMAN PODHORETZ

MAIN STREET, U.S.S.R., by Irving R. Levine. *Doubleday. $4.50.*

SHORT STORIES OF RUSSIA TODAY, edited by Yvonne Kapp. *Houghton Mifflin. $3.50.*

Since the restrictions against travel in the Soviet Union were loosened a few years ago, a literature has been developing in this country whose purpose is simply to satisfy American curiosity about life in Russia. In general, the tone of the articles and books that have so far appeared has been one of surprise—as though the writer expected to find himself in the apocalyptic world of Koestler and Orwell and had then made the astonishing discovery that the Russians are people too and that life goes on in recognizable fashion even under a totalitarian régime. One effect of this discovery has been to release a ravenous hunger for details about Soviet life, so that we can now probably anticipate a flood of such books as Irving R. Levine's *Main Street, U.S.S.R.* vying for the greatest accumulation of the trivia of the Russians' daily existence.

Mr. Levine, who is NBC's Moscow correspondent, conducts a radio program on which he answers questions from his listeners, and I gather that the kind of thing people want to know is whether Russians keep pets, how much they have to pay for a set of false teeth, what sort of ads are in the newspapers, and how to execute a left turn in Moscow traffic. *Main Street, U.S.S.R.* is written with an eye to such questions. The book is four hundred pages long and crammed with an infinite number of details on matters large and small. About as much space is devoted to the intricacies of making a telephone call from a public booth in Moscow as to the reorganization of agriculture and industry under Khrushchev, and we get more information about the programs on Russian television than about the curriculum of Russian schools. There is no denying the fascination of a book like this, and if it were not for the fact that Mr. Levine feels impelled to begin every chapter with an unfunny anecdote and to explain everything down to the ground, *Main Street, U.S.S.R.* might even have been a pleasure to read. As it is, however, we have to cut our way through the crust of an annoying slick-magazine manner to reach the core of solid matter within.

The passion for details seems to have bred a remarkably neutral attitude in Mr. Levine. I don't mean to imply that he has been in any sense "taken in," but only that his capacity for making general statements or large-scale moral judgments has been overwhelmed by his exposure to the sheer reality of Russian life. There is no guiding principle of organization, no controlling idea to fuse all the discrete particulars into a coherent picture. Russia, Mr. Levine tells us, is a great riddle—which amounts to declaring that nothing can be said about it except that it exists. And indeed, that is about all Mr. Levine will permit himself to say. In this, and in his curiosity about details, I would guess, he expresses the prevailing American mood of the moment—that the best we can hope for is peaceful coexistence and that we had better get used to the idea that the Communists are here to stay.

WHATEVER the defects of *Main Street, U.S.S.R.*, it does at least provide a great deal of information about Soviet life, which is more than can be said for the anthology just issued under the title *Short Stories of Russia Today*. The volume contains eighteen pieces written in the last twenty-five years, and it would be a depressing matter indeed if this collection really represented the best that Soviet literature has to offer. At least two of the stories selected by the editor (who, by the way, is associated with a small British publishing house that specializes in Communist books) are political hack work pure and simple—"Foma Zabotkin" (1937) by Vasily Ilyenkov and "The Third A.D.C." (1942) by the notorious

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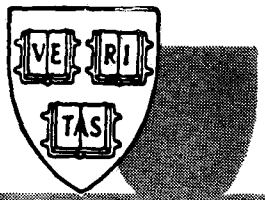
Konstantin Simonov—glorifications, respectively, of a collective-farm chairman and the political commissar of an army division. A couple of others (Vera Inber's "Spring Cleaning" and Boris Lavrenev's "The Last Swimming Event") are patriotic war stories of no merit whatever as literature, and a good half of the rest are cheap formula pieces dedicated to showing how glorious a thing it is to serve the building of "socialism." "The Cashier" (1955) by Nikolay Voronov, for example, is a wholly uninspired pep talk about a girl who trudges through a blinding snowstorm in order to bring their pay on time to the workers at an isolated construction site; and when we recall that this banal specimen of socialist realism comes from the brief "thaw," during which a number of truly vigorous stories sneaked their way into print, we can only assume that the editor made her selections in conformity with official Soviet opinion.

To be sure, an anthology of officially approved Russian stories has its own kind of documentary interest, and one would have voiced no objection to this volume if a preface had been attached explaining its nature, or if the dust-jacket copy had not presented it as a collection of the "classic stories of a fresh, vital, and unvulgarized people." The epithet that really hurts here is the slyly invidious "unvulgarized," because it is precisely the vulgarity of most of these stories that offends—a vulgarity that issues directly from the fatuous sense of uplift that the doctrine of socialist realism has imposed on Soviet writers. The most striking case in point is the late Vasily Riahovsky's "The Mother" (1939). Up until the last page or so, "The Mother" is an effective and honestly felt story dealing with the efforts of an old peasant woman who has trudged thousands of miles to restore her paralyzed son's will to live. The son is upset by his mother's visit to the hospital, and despite the fact that everyone in sight falls in love with her vitality and earthy wisdom, he continues to writhe in embarrassment and shame at her every remark and gesture. Toward the end, she finally succeeds in arousing him from the spiritual stupor into which he has fallen by playing a rather transparent psychological trick on him; and when he discovers that she has been disingenuously manipulating him all the time, he does not—as the character here portrayed would certainly have done—go into a petulant rage, but decides to follow her back home and take up the threads of his blasted life. What we have here is more than an artificially tacked-on happy ending; it is nothing less than a complete violation of artistic logic and truthfulness, and one imagines that Riahovsky himself writhed in embarrassment as he composed it.

Interestingly enough, two of the contributions to this volume are about animals—the late Mihail Prishvin's "His First Point" (1935) and the late Ivan Aramilev's "Berendey" (undated). Both are charming if not particularly distinguished, and neither seems to suffer from the kind of falsity that the stories about human relationships almost invariably involve. Two others, Nikolay Tihonov's "A Cavalcade" (1941) and Vera Inber's "Nor-Bibi's Crime" (1934) are set in exotic regions of the Soviet Union and are concerned with the effects of modernization on a backward local culture. This is the one theme, it appears, that lends itself to honest exploitation by writers who want to toe the party line. Miss Inber (whose early poems were attacked for aesthetic and decadence) gives us a very delicate portrait of a Moslem girl in Samarkand who is ultimately liberated from bondage to her cruel husband with the help of the Komsomol, and it must be said that the ideological uplift of the ending in this case seems aesthetically right.

The one genuinely distinguished story in the whole collection is Yury Nagibin's "The Night Guest" (1955), which is about a great charmer who appears one night in a remote fishing lodge with no equipment and yet manages to get everyone to do his bidding and supply him with whatever he needs, but who is gradually and subtly exposed as a shallow, despicable creature. On the evidence of these thirty pages alone, Nagibin (still under forty) is a writer of considerable power and insight who has a feel for fishing and hunting comparable to Hemingway's, and it would be interesting to see some of his other work translated into English.



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MUSIC

'He Knows Why I'm Crying'

NAT HENTOFF

LIKE MANY second-generation American Jews, I did not as a child go to the synagogue with joy. Alfred Kazin has spoken for a number of us in *A Walker in the City*: "Secretly, I thought the synagogue a mean place, and went only because I was expected to. Whenever I crossed the splintered and creaking porch into that stale air of snuff, of old men and old books, and saw the dusty gilt brocade on the prayer shawls, I felt I was being pulled into some mysterious and ancient clan that claimed me as its own simply because I had been born a block away. Whether I agreed with its beliefs or not, I belonged; whether I assented to its rights over me or not, I belonged; whatever I thought of them, no matter how far I might drift from that place, I belonged. This was understood in the very nature of things; I was a Jew."

Only the music, the cry of the cantor, drew me willingly. By the time I was twelve, I had begun to hear and be stirred by the blues on "race" records. Bessie Smith and the cantor surely sang of different things, but in both I heard the same stubbornness outwaiting pain, the same insistence that sorrows must end. Next year in Jerusalem, the sun will shine in my back door.

My father attended Orthodox services. He went less from deep religious conviction than because he "belonged." He did not feel at home in the Reform or even the Conservative congregations, where the ritual had been "modernized." Having been born in Russia, my father was accustomed to the east European tradition of improvising virtuosi cantors whose unyielding wailing was more Oriental than Occidental.

"The Cantor (*Hazzan*)," conductor-composer-teacher Seymour Silbermintz has explained, "being the *Shliach Tzibur* or Messenger of the Congregation, was in reality an extension of the worshipper; only his expression in prayer was a more artistic, elaborate, melodically developed one, despite the usual handicap of limited formal training. . . . Rhythmically, the Cantorial recitative was free. It followed the words, even repeating them over and over again for emphasis, the grammatical accent being generally ignored. Its melody was not confined. It was not measured music, with only this exception: occasionally, and that usually near the end of a piece, a refrain-like melody might be introduced. This was something more easily grasped by the average congregant. He would thus refresh his ears from the intense concentration demanded in following the Cantor's 'sayings' by joining with the Cantor in singing or humming this melody."

During the High Holidays, my father and I would visit all the Orthodox synagogues we could reach by walking, and compare the choirs and especially the cantors. The excitement of hearing brilliant new improvisations and a hazzan with unusual power almost equaled for me my visits to town to hear the Count Basie and Duke Ellington bands and their storytelling horns.

IT'S BEEN MANY YEARS since I've gone to a synagogue. I continued to collect cantorial records, however, and often wondered what was happening to the cantorial art as Orthodox congregations diminished and more of the younger Jews supported Reform and Conservative temples. In the process of finding out, I learned that cantorial singing is a vocal art whose sources date back to before the exile from Palestine.

Lazare Saminsky notes in the *International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians,* in the article "Jewish Music," that "The chanting of the Biblical verse by the people is believed to have been established in the epoch of Ezra the Scribe (Fifth Century B.C.), and this cantillation of the Bible . . . transmitted orally from generation to generation formed the basis of Jewish traditional music. . . . Nearly all Christian and Jewish authorities maintain that . . . ancient Hebrew chants and neumes were used by the first Christians and have become the basis of the early Christian hymns, the Ambrosian and Gregorian music."

After the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70, instrumental music was forbidden in the synagogues of the dispersed, partly in mourning for the Temple and partly in opposition to pagan practices. The cantillation (chanting in fixed musical patterns) of the weekly scriptural lesson continued, but instead of the choral singing that predominated in the time of the Temple, one person became the messenger of the congregation. He was usually a well-educated, prosperous layman with an agreeable voice and the respect of the community. In addition to the cantillation, he sang psalms and post-Biblical prayers, and, in some cases, ecstatic wordless hymns.

WHEN meter and rhyme began to be brought into the liturgy, the untrained layman was no longer adequate. Dr. Eric Werner, Professor of Sacred Music at Hebrew Union College and one of the leading musicologists in this field, estimates that the professional paid cantor began to be appointed around the seventh century. "During the subsequent five or six centuries, he was poet, composer, singer and teacher at the same time. What has remained of the musical tradition was preserved by the *Hazzan.*" It was during these centuries that the practice of "an improvising performance, based upon any of the familiar modes" by the cantor, became increasingly popular.

As the Jews established themselves in different areas, varying musical traditions were developed. "The Sephardic (Spanish-Arabic) tradition was observed by all the Mediterranean and most of the Oriental Jews," explains Dr. Werner, "while continental European Jewry moulded its own style, the Ashkenazic tradition." The Yemenite and Babylonian Jews had already developed their approach, which remains relatively unchanged.

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Until the Jews were driven from Spain late in the fifteenth century, much Spanish-Jewish music became quite sophisticated in technique and sometimes brilliant in its adaptations of the polyphonic developments of the era. In Italy, too, the synagogue chant was temporarily turned into art music by several Jewish composers during the Renaissance, most notably by Salamone Rossi (Columbia ML 5204).

In central Europe, the Ashkenazic vein absorbed some non-Jewish folk and formal musical elements but essentially retained its identity. It was in the music of east European Jewry, however, that improvisation and its accompanying melisma (melodic embellishments as when one syllable is sung to several notes) flourished. The general rule in cantorial singing has been, incidentally, that the more solemn the passage, the greater the use of melisma.

DURING the seventeenth century, after central European synagogue music had been brought into eastern Europe by immigrants to Poland and Russia, a strong reaction against the German approach led to a particularly intense preference for virtuosic cantorial singing among east European Jews. "During this revision," Dr. Werner indicates, "the Cantor . . . attained a position of paramount importance. Keen to hear new music as the Eastern European Jews always were, but restricted to the synagogue as their main institution of learning and art, they naturally urged the Cantor to satisfy this longing. He was forever called upon to provide new tunes for the weekly service on Friday evening and the Sabbath and to interpret and arrange them in a manner that would satisfy the artistic longing of the congregations . . . The requirements of a good *Hazzan* were: he had to possess a sweet voice, in the Oriental sense, meaning a lyric tenor of nasal quality . . . he had to be well trained in brilliant coloratura-singing . . . he had to be a versatile and original improviser upon certain traditional modes . . . The emphasis on the vocal soloist, who at the same time had to perform a priestly function, led inevitably to the idolization of certain outstanding singers, improvisation led to anarchy, brilliance to empty showmanship . . ."

Some cantors, in fact, interpolated flamboyantly alien material into the services, including operatic arias. A ubiquitous favorite by the end of the nineteenth century was "Rachel" from *La Juive*. As he had been in eastern Europe, the virtuoso cantor was also the "star" among Jews from there who came to America. The most renowned would make guest appearances in synagogues other than their own, and recordings of the master cantors—Josef Rosenblatt, Savel Kwartin, and Pierre Pinchik among them—sold steadily and were treasured in many first-generation Orthodox Jewish homes. These and other cantors illustrated that the east European tradition had not wholly become "empty showmanship," that for men like my father they were still messengers. Some were particularly oriented in the passionate Hasidic tradition that had begun in eastern Europe in the eighteenth century. To the members of this mystical sect, music was an indispensable part of prayer and preparation for worship, and it was music—as in many Negro gospel churches today—of hypnotic spontaneity, often without words.

A generally available recording of one of the master cantors is *Masterpieces of the Synagogue: The Art of Cantor Josef Rosenblatt*, recorded from 1920 to 1922 (Camden CAL-453). Several of the "stars" of that generation are included in an anthology, *The Golden Voices of Israel* (Victor LPT-1017), that is now out of print but is available by mail from Metro Music, 54 Second Avenue, New York, which specializes in Jewish music.

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY in central Europe, campaigns were started to make Jewish liturgical music less Oriental and more acceptable to those Jews who had become increasingly assimilated into the dominant culture. Cantor-composers and musicologists worked to bring more dignity to the services and to establish a seriously researched tradition of proper practices in synagogue music. Among them were Salomon Sulzer, a friend of Schubert; Samuel Naumbourg in

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Paris; Eduard Birnbaum; and A. Z. Idelsohn. The last two continued the work into this century. According to Dr. Werner, Birnbaum "laid the foundation for the systematic study of synagogue music" and Idelsohn contributed further important research and systematization.

The "purgation" of Jewish liturgy, as several of the musicologists term the musical changes in the synagogue, took place as the Reform and Conservative movements grew in strength. Although Orthodox spokesmen continue to claim that their congregations remain the largest in the aggregate, it seems clear that most younger non-Yiddish-speaking Jews—especially in the United States, where five million of the world's remaining twelve million Jews now live—are being attracted, if they go to the synagogue at all, to the Reform or the Conservative movement. Both the latter claim rising numbers because the newer Jewish generation appears more interested in religious roots—or community centers, say some observers—than its predecessor.

In Conservative and Reform synagogues, the services are in the vernacular as well as in Hebrew—more so in the Reform. Although Reform services are not as empty of ritual as they were ten years and more ago, there is a chasm in attitudes and practices between the Orthodox synagogue and a Reform temple; in the latter the head is not covered, the prayer books have been modernized, and the improvising cantor has been considerably curbed. The Conservative services retain much ritual, and Conservative cantors still improvise quite freely within the traditional modes, although they, too, are very conscious of remaining within the limits of "good taste" and providing sound musicological grounds for their improvisations.

As musicologist Dr. Eric Werner said recently with evident satisfaction, "We originally learned from the cantors; now the cantors learn from us."

THE School of Sacred Music of Hebrew Union College in New York, where Dr. Werner teaches, is one of the three leading training centers for cantors in the world. Although its course of study includes all three major branches of Judaism, it is regarded by Orthodox and Conservative leaders as representing primarily the Reform movement, as does the American Conference of Certified Cantors, which the School of Sacred Music instituted. Conservative cantors are graduated from the Cantors Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America; their professional society is the Cantors Assembly of America. Orthodox candidates attend the Cantorial Training Institute at Yeshiva University. There are still part-time cantors who officiate mainly at High Holidays, usually for Orthodox and Conservative congregations that do not have a full-time hazzan, and they are likely to have learned their craft by observation and by oral tradition.

The destruction of most of the European Jewish community means that no schools for cantors exist there now, although there has been a report that one may begin in Paris. "When a Berlin congregation needed a cantor a few years ago,"

notes Dr. Werner, "they sent to us." As for Israel, Dr. Werner adds, there are as yet no schools for cantors although one is being planned in Jerusalem. It will, of course, be Orthodox.

Before being graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in the cantor-educator program at Hebrew Union College, the student must complete a rigorous five-year course that comprises, among other disciplines, the history of Jewish music and liturgy, cantillation, harmony, synagogal chants, choral ensemble and conducting, and a bibliography workshop. Most of the east European cantors who improvised within the *nusach* (the modal prayer chants) couldn't read music.

The school is also responsible for the Sacred Music Press, which reissues valuable cantorial works. A major contribution has been *The Out-of-Print Classics of Cantorial Liturgy,* in thirty-five volumes.

The student cantors are taught—and are still allowed—to improvise; but improvisation, says Dr. Werner, is hardly as vital a function for them as it was for their predecessors through the centuries. "There is as much improvisation," he explains, "as the congregation is willing to take. Improvisation, after all, goes against the ever-growing trend toward a more artistic refinement of synagogue music. As music becomes more artistic, it becomes written and fixed. In that respect, it can be said that the improvisational part of the cantorial art is dying. We are—by our limited westernization of an old Oriental art—reinterpreting tradition, cleansing the music, making it professional and artistic. Moreover, we educate our men so that, as the English would say, they know their place and understand their integrated function in the community as well as the synagogue."

THE COURSES at the Jewish Theological Seminary and Yeshiva University are also thorough and tough. A leading spokesman for the Conservative wing is Cantor David Putterman of the Park Avenue Synagogue, New York, founder and currently executive vice-president of the Cantors Assembly of America. Putterman does not believe that cantorial improvisation is a dying art, at least so far as Conservative synagogues are concerned. "In the Reform temples," he says, "the cantor's function is exceedingly limited. The choir has the major portion of the service, and the hazzan sings the important solos. In our services, there is much more room for the cantor to improvise.

"It used to be, however," Cantor Putterman continued, "that a hazzan improvised for twenty minutes on one little prayer, but I don't think the modern congregation would sit through that much. It is true, then, that improvisation has become more disciplined in our services. The cantor, too, has become a full-time worker at his synagogue. He teaches Jewish music to adults, organizes and trains volunteer choruses, and teaches the children, including classes for the *bar mitzvah*.

"There are no longer 'stars' as

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there were in the old days when an Orthodox synagogue would also change cantors frequently. The modern cantor has tenure and economic security. He is not a traveling idol. And cantorial records are becoming as few as the 'stars.' Like the Yiddish theater and Yiddish newspapers, the collecting of cantorial recordings will go with the disappearance of the older generation of Jews raised in eastern Europe. The young American Jews today prefer to buy records of Ernest Bloch's *Schelomo* and Leonard Bernstein's *Jeremiah Symphony*. To them, that is Jewish music; and in the synagogue, you have to give the young element music of a caliber to which they're accustomed."

Accordingly, more and more Reform and Conservative liturgical music is being written by contemporary composers. Cantor Putterman has been especially involved in this development, and the book *Synagogue Music by Contemporary Composers* (G. Schirmer, Inc., New York) contains thirty-eight works for the Sabbath eve service composed specifically for the Park Avenue Synagogue. The contributors include David Diamond, Darius Milhaud, Arthur Berger, Leonard Bernstein, and Kurt Weill.

Other synagogues throughout the country are commissioning contemporary settings for sections of their services. A *Sacred Service* has been written by Bloch (London LL 123), by Milhaud (Concert Hall Society LP 1103), and by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco. Among American composers who specialize in Jewish liturgical works are Isadore Freed, Abraham Binder, Gershon Ephros, Max Helfman, and Herbert Fromm. The late Frederick Jacobi and Jacob Weinberg were also active. In Israel Paul Ben Haim and Oedoen Partos are the outstanding composers in this field. Dr. Werner believes that Jews today are hearing "music of a splendor the like of which the synagogue has never had."

THERE ARE still a few Orthodox "star" cantors. One is Sholom Katz, born in Romania and trained in Budapest and Vienna. His singing is said to have saved him from inclusion in a mass execution at a Nazi concentration camp in the Ukraine. In America since 1947, he is cantor of the Beth Sholom congregation in Washington, and is heard in concert in Israel, South America, and throughout the United States.

Sholom Katz finds it difficult to understand the Reform movement, and will not sing in a Reform synagogue. "They don't have cantors," he says. "They have soloists. And it sometimes doesn't seem to matter whether they're Jewish or not."

The cantor does feel that a general renaissance of the Jewish religion is taking place in America. "The last generation was like a lost generation, but today they are coming back." He also feels that the younger American-born, American-trained cantors are competent but mostly lack the "cry" of the east Europeans.

"After all," he says, "it was the suffering that made them sound like they did. Where can you find cantors like that now? Open the graves, the six million graves. It's not only the singers who are missing. We are missing Jewish writers, Jewish artists of all kinds. They cut out the heart."

For Westminster Records, Sholom Katz is recording a series of interpretations of traditional synagogue music. He feels these albums are his contribution to a future when there will be no more cantors of his background. (*Sabbath in the Synagogue*, Westminster XWN 3304; *Cantorial Gems*, Westminster XWN 18729; *Lest We Forget*, XWN 18646.)

"EVEN NOW," Cantor Katz adds, "the recordings are being used by Jews who cannot get to a synagogue. I have met people from small towns in Texas and Idaho that have only thirty or forty Jews. They are pious Jews, and they play the recordings every Friday night. And when a pious Jew listens to my singing, he knows why I'm crying.

"Nor," Cantor Katz returned to the future, "do all the best young American Jewish singers go into cantorial study. Eddie Fisher's father wanted him to be a cantor, but he makes more now in one night than a cantor does in a year. He even sings 'White Christmas.' It's a free country. And Perry Como sings 'Kol Nidre' on television. He used to sing it with a *yarmulke* on, but last year he didn't wear a hat. I suppose he became Reformed."

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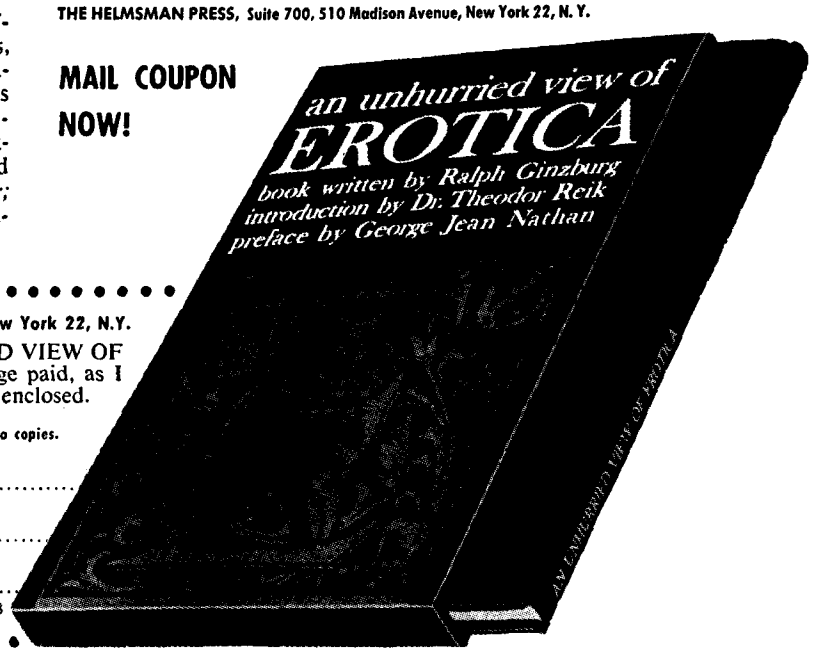
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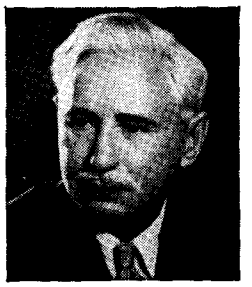

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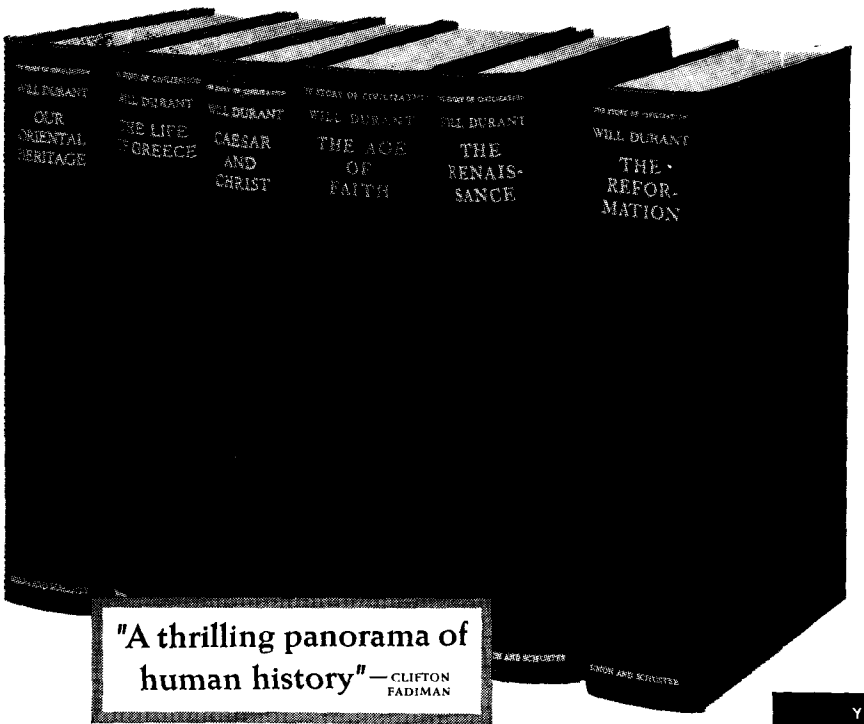

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